Aventura

3

Never Give Up

Life at the Gauus School of Witchcraft and Wizardry is never dull—and often it's dangerous. Chris Cottenburg, a High Elf, was a student of magic until calamity struck. Now his life giving crystal has gone missing, and Professor Arches must undertake a perilous journey to save his student—a journey deep into the shadows of Chris's soul!

Includes special extras after the story!

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Aventura

SHIN MIDORIKAWA

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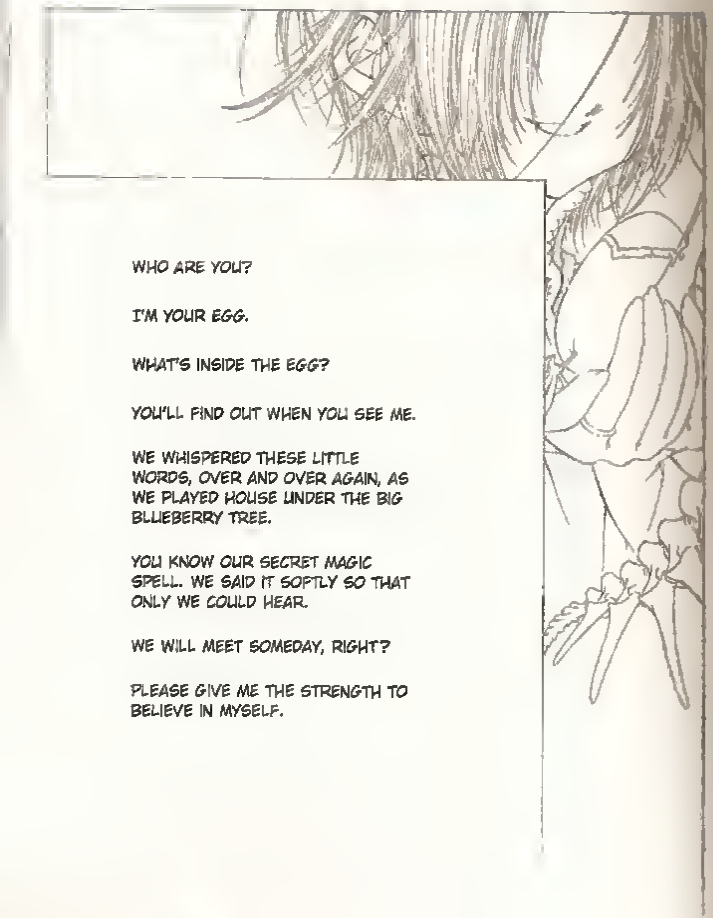


WHO ARE YOU?

I'M YOUR EGG.

WHAT'S INSIDE THE EGG?

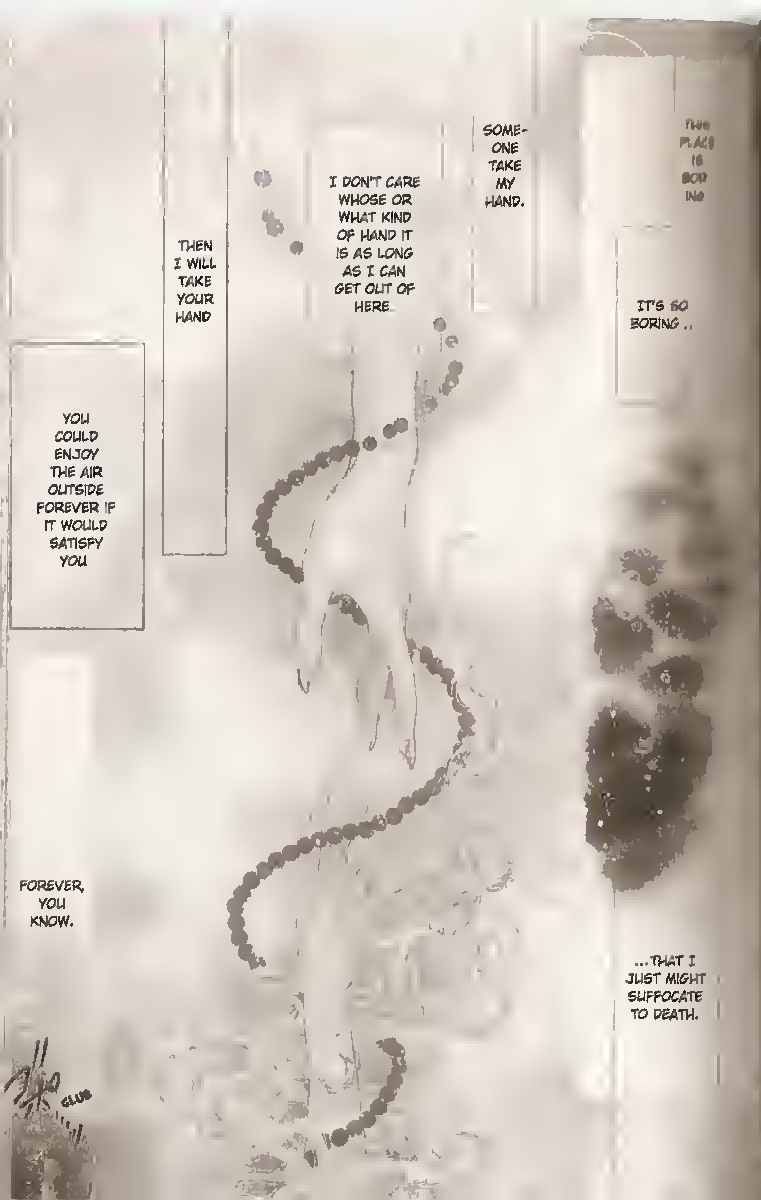
YOU'LL FIND OUT WHEN YOU SEE ME.

WE WHISPERED THESE LITTLE WORDS, OVER AND OVER AGAIN, AS WE PLAYED HOUSE UNDER THE BIG BLUEBERRY TREE.

YOU KNOW OUR SECRET MAGIC SPELL. WE SAID IT SOFTLY SO THAT ONLY WE COULD HEAR.

WE WILL MEET SOMEDAY, RIGHT?

PLEASE GIVE ME THE STRENGTH TO BELIEVE IN MYSELF.


SOME-ONE TAKE MY HAND.
I DON'T CARE WHOSE OR WHAT KIND OF HAND IT IS AS LONG AS I CAN GET OUT OF HERE.
THEN I WILL TAKE YOUR HAND
YOU COULD ENJOY THE AIR OUTSIDE FOREVER IF IT WOULD SATISFY YOU
FOREVER, YOU KNOW.
THIS PLACE IS BORING
IT'S SO BORING..
...THAT I JUST MIGHT SUFFOCATE TO DEATH.

Aventura 3

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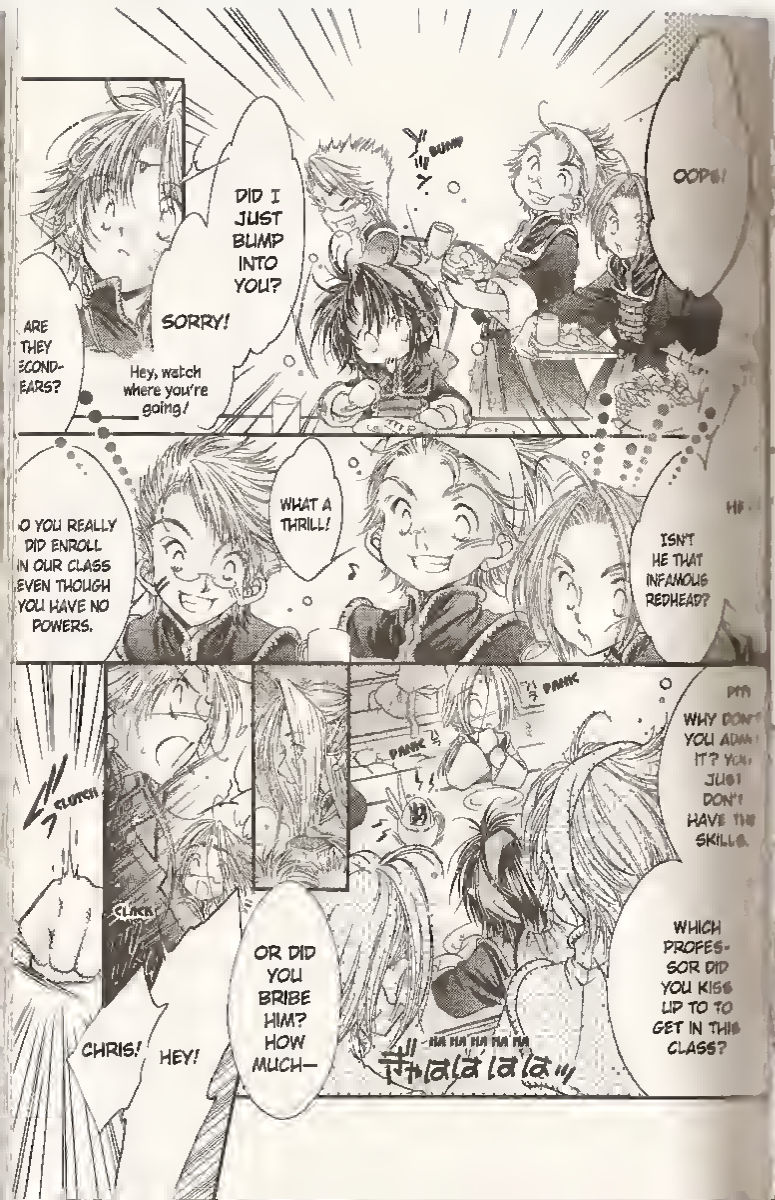
BEEP BEEP
AHH!
AHH!
PROFES-SOR... WHERE IS EVERY-BODY?
LEWIN! SOELA!
IT'S DARK.
I KEEP RUN-NING AND RUNNING, BUT WHY CAN'T I SEE WHAT IS IN FRONT OF ME?
OOPS, I'M SORRY!
AHH!

THERE IS NO WAY I COULD FORGET.
I'M BEING DRAWN...
...INTO THE DARKNESS THAT IS AT MY FINGERTIPS.
A DARKNESS THAT'S IN MY HEART.
I STILL LACK THE STRENGTH LIKE LEWIN'S TO CHANGE THIS INTO LIGHT.
HAA!
HUFF.
HAA...
I HAVEN'T HAD THIS DREAM IN A WHILE.
DON'T WORRY, THIES. YOU DON'T HAVE TO SHOW ME THIS DREAM.
I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN... WHAT I HAVE DONE.

TWEET
TWEET
TWEET
IT WILL MAKE THE DARKNESS SEEM LIGHTER.
OH...
I'M GLAD...
IT'S A TWIN HALF MOON
...THE MOONLIGHT IS BRIGHT TODAY.
NOTHING WILL CHANGE ONCE I CLOSE MY EYES.
BUT...

MORNING.
OH?
YOU DON'T NEED TO COUNT!
SHUFFLE
OH SHUT UP!
SHUFFLE
TEASING
SHUFFLE
YOU CHANGED YOUR EXPRESSION 11 TIMES
IT'S ONLY 20 METERS TO THE CORNER OF THE HALLWAY.
WHAT'S WITH THIS PATROL REPORT FROM LAST NIGHT?
TYPOS AND OMISSIONS EVERYWHERE!
BUMP
Whoa.
UMPH!
IF YOU STAY UP ALL NIGHT, THAT'S YOUR CHOICE—BUT YOU STILL NEED TO DO YOUR JOB
I GOT ELLED AT.
SO I WAS LOOKING THROUGH BOOKS ABOUT GUARDIAN BEASTS AND MAGICAL CONTRACTS.
I HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED AS THEIR NEW SUPERVISOR.
SNIFF
YOU KNOW WE HAVE TRANSFER STUDENTS IN BOTH CLASSES TODAY.
RIGHT FROM THE SECOND LINE.
HUH?
TYPOS?
HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT!
I SEE.
Hey!
FLUTTER
IT'S TRUE!
THAT'S A GOOD EXCUSE YOU CAME UP WITH
JEEZ, YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME AT ALL!
THOSE UNCHARACTERISTIC MISTAKES HAD ME WORRIED, BUT YOU'RE JUST YAWNING
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING ON LATELY?
YAWN
UHN
UHHNNNNN!
MORNING, RIV! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I WONDER WHICH ONE IS THE REAL YOU, ARSHES.
HUH?
BOY, I CAN'T WAKE UP AT ALL.
IT WASN'T THAT BIG A DEAL TO STAY UP THREE NIGHTS IN A ROW BEFORE.

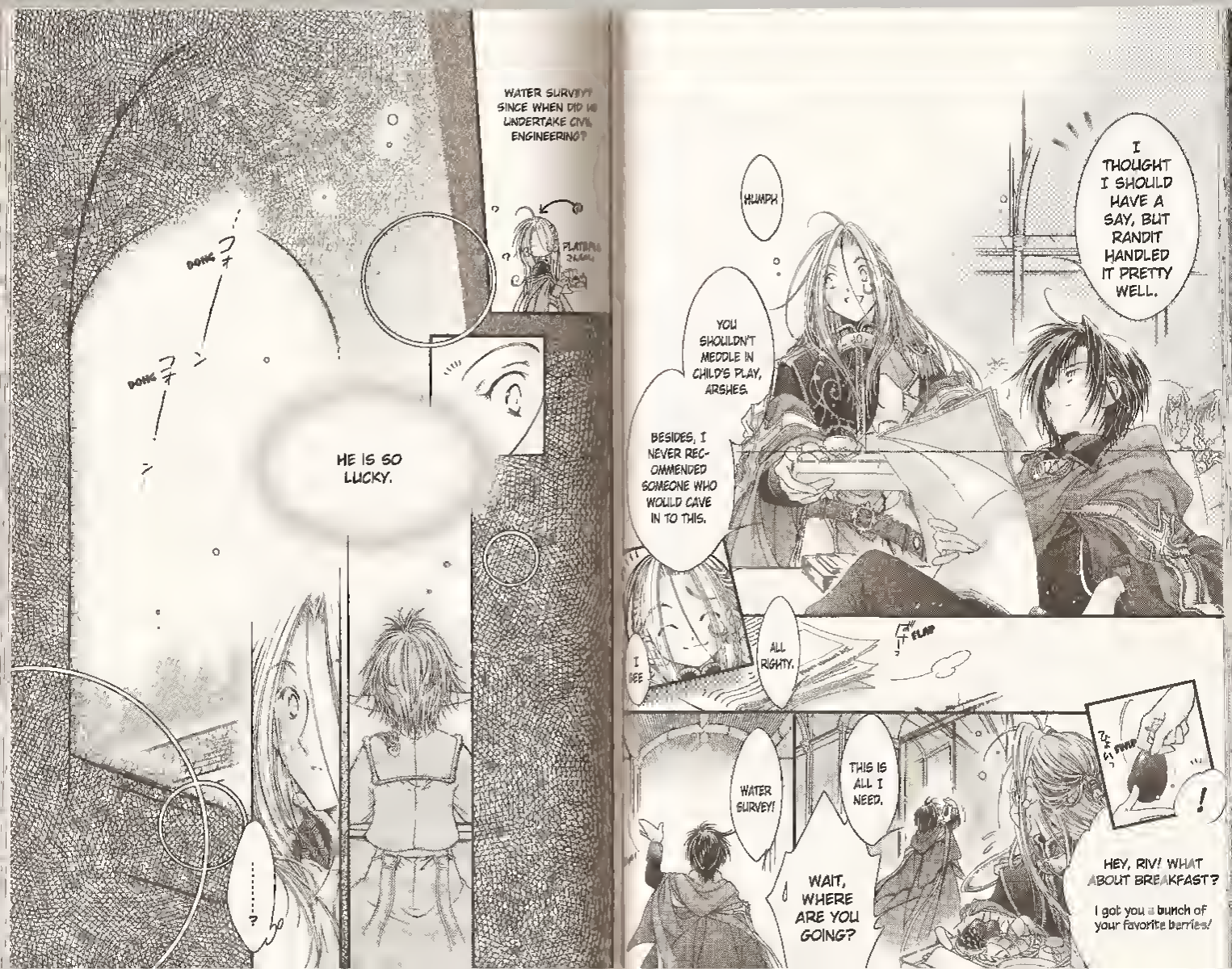
I AM TRYING HARD!!
MORNING
OH, MORNING, PROFESSOR!
RANDOMLY @ NODS
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, SO DID YOU FIND ANY-THING?
IT'S PROFESSOR ARSHES
WHY ARE YOU DEPRESSED?
NADA! I COMPLETELY STRUCK OUT.
READING FOREIGN THESES AND ORDERING OUTER WORLD NEWSPAPERS
PROFESSOR, LET'S HAVE BREAKFAST!
OKAY, I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!
"ABNORMAL WATER LEVELS AROUND THE WORLD!"
RIVER OVERFLOWS CAUSING FATALITIES!"
Ha!
IT WON'T BE THAT EASY—
IT'S THIS MORNING'S PAPER FROM THE OUTER WORLD.
THEY SEEM TO BE IN BIG TROUBLE. I WONDER WHY.
DIDN'T THEY GET UNDINE'S BLESSING?
EH?
HEY, ARSHES!
KEEP MAKING THAT SORT OF REMARK, AND I'LL TELL MI-LIEU TO MAKE YOUR SMOKES EXTRA BITTER.
YOUR DAY'S ENERGY COMES FROM BREAK-FAST!
UH-OH.
MUNCH
SCORE
WAFF DA MADDA, GUYS? IS DAH SOMETIN ON MY FAIT?
YES. YOU'VE GOT BREAD CRUMBS ALL OVER YOUR MOUTH.
ON STANDBY
FIRMLY

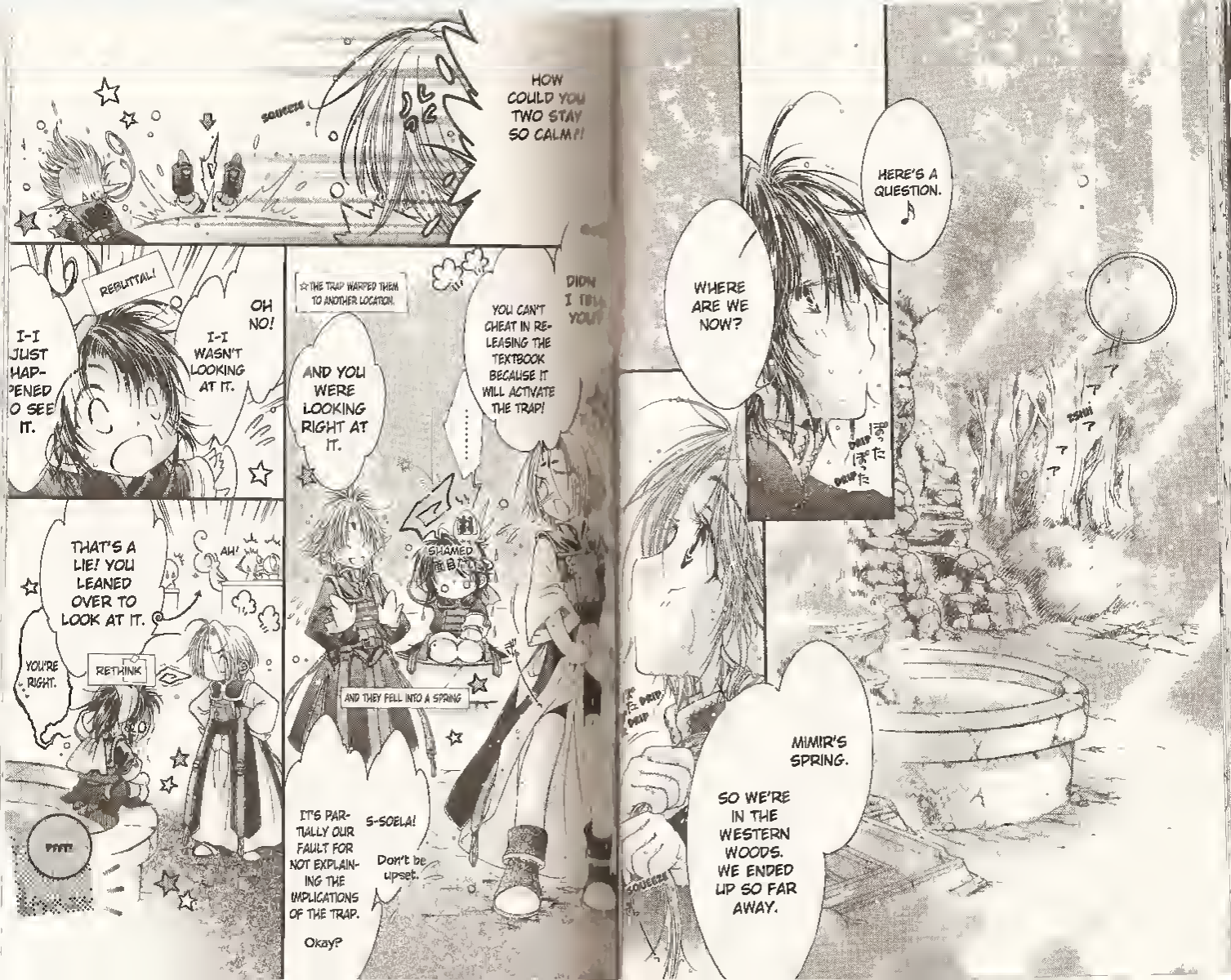

BUMP
OOPS!
DID I JUST BUMP INTO YOU?
SORRY!
ARE THEY SECOND-EARS?
Hey, watch where you're going!
HE...
ISN'T HE THAT INFAMOUS REDHEAD?
WHAT A THRILL!
SO YOU REALLY DID ENROLL IN OUR CLASS EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE NO POWERS.
PANIC
PANIC
WHY DON'T YOU ADMIT IT? YOU JUST DON'T HAVE THE SKILLS.
WHICH PROFESSOR DID YOU KISS UP TO TO GET IN THIS CLASS?
CLUTCH
CLUTCH
CHRIS!
HEY!
OR DID YOU BRIBE HIM? HOW MUCH—
HA HA HA HA HA
ला ला ला

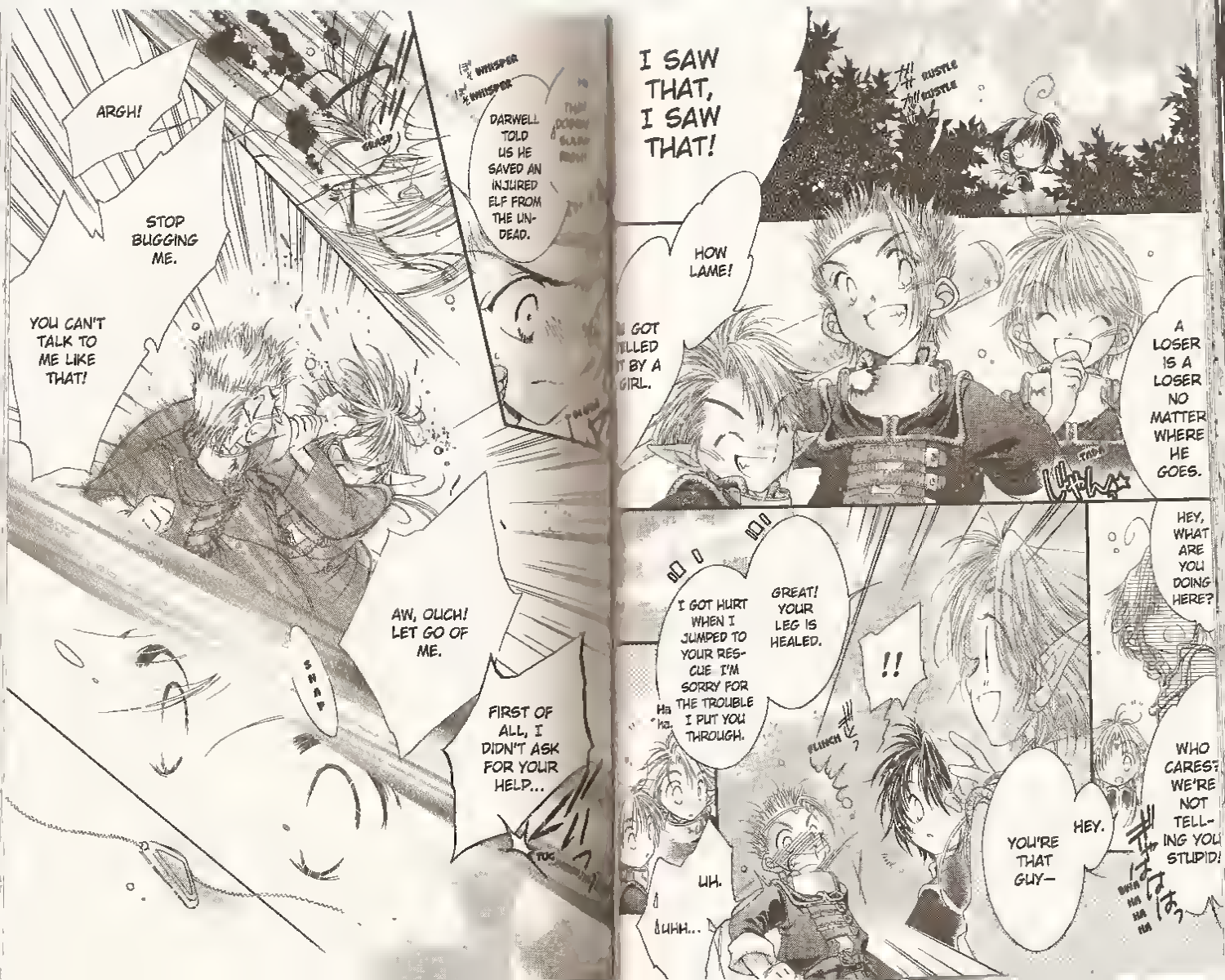
DIDN'T YOU EAT A LOT LAST NIGHT? YOU'RE STILL HUNGRY?
BUT YOU WERE SO PREOCCUPIED WITH EATING.
YOU KNOW YOUR FOOD WON'T RUN AWAY.
DON'T JUST LOOK AT ME, TELL ME!
PFFT PFFT PFFT
SHIP SHIP SHIP
NOT REALLY. GRANNY ALWAYS TOLD ME TO HAVE A GOOD BREAKFAST IN THE MORNING.
I JUST WONDER HOW LONG IT HAS BEEN SINCE I LAST ATE IN HERE LIKE THIS.
I MIGHT BE ENJOYING BREAKFAST ON SUCH A DIFFERENT MORNING BUT...
I FORGOT IT'S A BUFFET, TOO.

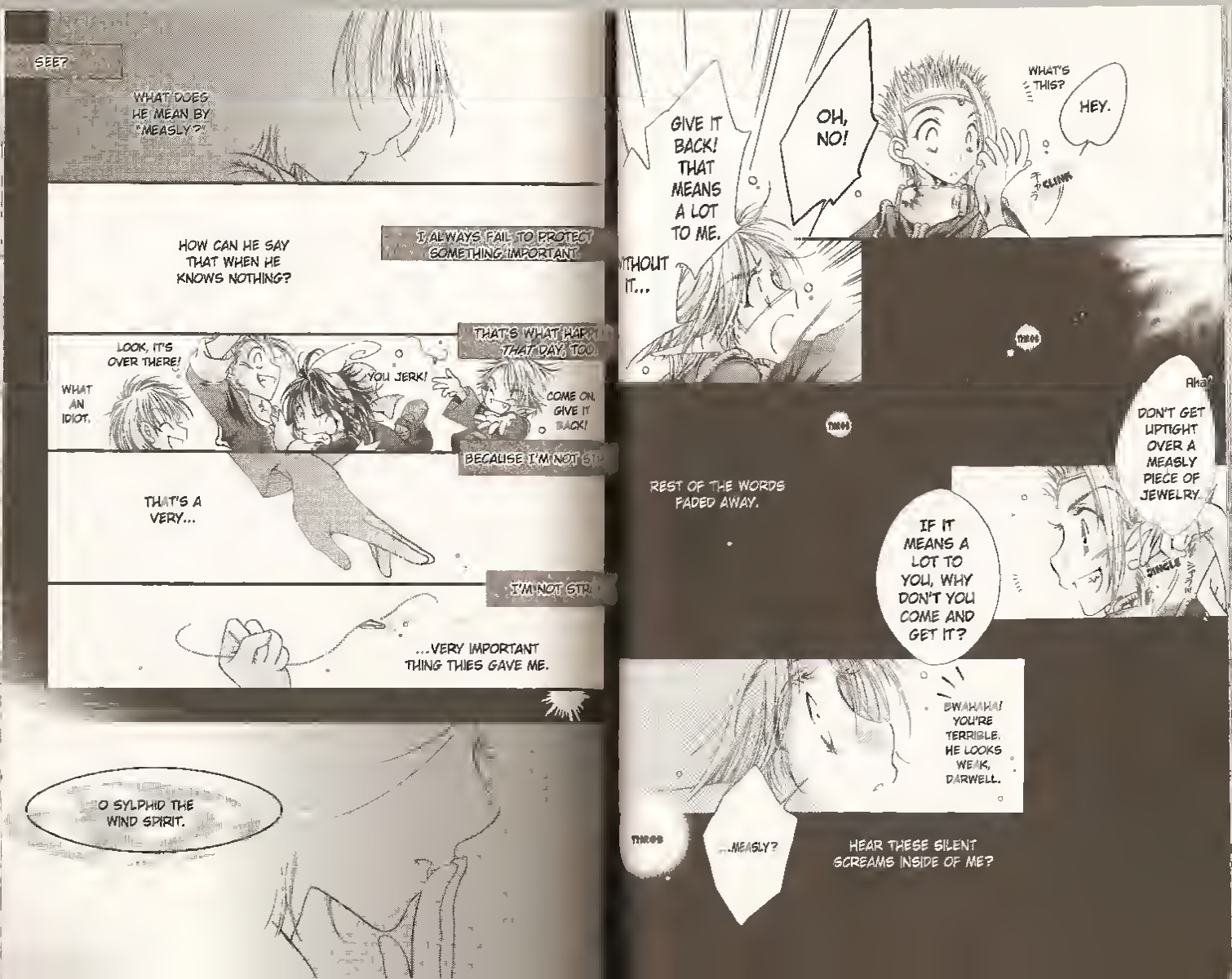
WHAT A CHARACTER!
YOU COULD PUT IT THAT WAY.
Yeah.
BLUSH
FLINCH
POUT
Y-
PLAY
MOMENTARY PAUSE
DON'T LAUGH!
EH?
HA HA HA HA
HE'S RIGHT GUY
IT'S A LITTLE EARLY TO BE RUINING THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND HERE.
THAT ARMBAND... IT'S HIM!
I-IS THAT JACINTH-
WHOOSH
PIPIP
PIPIP
PIPIP
What?
NO WAY, THEY'RE FOURTH-YEARS!
This is bad.
L-LET'S SCRAM!
BLEHH!
COME ON! STOP BUGGING ME!
FWIP
CAN'T YOU BE QUIET DURING BREAK-FAST?
DON'T YOU KNOW?
ZOOM
INCH
THE GOD OF FUTILITY DWELLS DURING MEALS.
YOU SHOULDN'T UNSHEATHE YOUR WORDS OR MAKE NOISE IN SUCH A PLACE! Remember that!
FUTILITY?
HUH?
L-LEWIN
DON'T YOU MEAN.. THE GOD OF FERTILITY?
AH
WHISPER

YOU SAY THOSE HARD DAYS...
...DON'T MATTER.
I-I'D LIKE SOME, TOO.
HOW ABOUT YOU, SOELA?
A REAL GOOD ONE
ONE CHOCOLATE FLAKES PLEASE! Okay!
PEEP! PEEP!
FLINCH
GOT IT!
OKAY, I'LL HAVE ONE.
YOU'RE SO STRONG...
HMM.
BECAUSE YOU HAVE THE LIGHT THAT I'M MISSING.
THE LIGHT I'M MISSING...
HEY.
HEY, LEWIN. ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
UNFAZED
Yeah. I'M FINE
L-LEWIN, IT'S "OUT OF THE ORDINARY"
IT'S NOTHING OF THE ORDINARY IN SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS.
AND THERE'S MORE.
CLASSMATES USED TO PRANK ME BY DROPPING TOAST WITH HONEY ON MY HEAD OR TRIPPING ME, OR MAKING A PITCHER OF MILK TO POUR ALL OVER ME.
IT BECAME AN EVERY DAY THING SO I STOPPED EATING HERE EXCEPT FOR DINNER.
CHATTER
Umpkin
Choco Chip
Frosting
EH?
FLINCH
CLANG!
THAT DOESN'T MATTER...
HEY, CHRIS. IS YOUR STOMACH BOTHERING YOU? YOU HAVEN'T EATEN MUCH.
I KNOW, CHRIS. HAVE SOME CORN FLAKES!
HELP YOURSELF!
Finley
THANK YOU!
IT'S TASTES GOOD BY ITSELF BUT...
...I'D SUGGEST IT WITH TWO PARTS CHOCOLATE CHIP TO ONE PART CRUSHED SUGAR!
NO, IT'S OKAY.


WATER SURVEY? SINCE WHEN DID HE UNDERTAKE CIVIL ENGINEERING?
PLATINA
DOING フォ
DOING フォ
HE IS SO LUCKY.
.....?
I THOUGHT I SHOULD HAVE A SAY, BUT RANDIT HANDLED IT PRETTY WELL.
HUMPH
YOU SHOULDN'T MEDDLE IN CHILD'S PLAY, ARSHES.
BESIDES, I NEVER RECOMMENDED SOMEONE WHO WOULD CAVE IN TO THIS.
I SEE
ALL RIGHTY.
FLIP
WATER SURVEY!
THIS IS ALL I NEED.
WAIT, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
フォン
HEY, RIV! WHAT ABOUT BREAKFAST?
I got you a bunch of your favorite berries!


HERE'S A QUESTION.
WHERE ARE WE NOW?
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
ZSHII
MIMIR'S SPRING.
SO WE'RE IN THE WESTERN WOODS. WE ENDED UP SO FAR AWAY.
DRIP
DRIP
DRIP
SQUEEZE
HOW COULD YOU TWO STAY SO CALM?!
SQUEEZE
AH!
REBUTTAL!
I-I JUST HAP-PENED TO SEE IT.
OH NO!
I-I WASN'T LOOKING AT IT.
THAT'S A LIE! YOU LEANED OVER TO LOOK AT IT.
AH!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
RETHINK
PFFT
☆THE TRAP WARPED THEM TO ANOTHER LOCATION.
AND YOU WERE LOOKING RIGHT AT IT.
DIDN'T I TELL YOU?
YOU CAN'T CHEAT IN RE-LEASING THE TEXTBOOK BECAUSE IT WILL ACTIVATE THE TRAP!
.....
SHAMED
AND THEY FELL INTO A SPRING
IT'S PAR-TIALLY OUR FAULT FOR NOT EXPLAIN-ING THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE TRAP.
Okay?
S-SOELA!
Don't be upset.


ARGH!
STOP BUGGING ME.
YOU CAN'T TALK TO ME LIKE THAT!
AW, OUCH! LET GO OF ME.
FIRST OF ALL, I DIDN'T ASK FOR YOUR HELP...
WHISPER WHISPER
DARWELL TOLD US HE SAVED AN INJURED ELF FROM THE UNDEAD.
I SAW THAT, I SAW THAT!
RUSTLE RUSTLE
HOW LAME!
A LOSER IS A LOSER NO MATTER WHERE HE GOES.
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
!!
HEY.
YOU'RE THAT GUY—
WHO CARES? WE'RE NOT TELLING YOU STUPID!
GREAT! YOUR LEG IS HEALED.
I GOT HURT WHEN I JUMPED TO YOUR RESCUE I'M SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE I PUT YOU THROUGH.
Ha ha.
UH.
UHH...


SEE?
WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY "MEASLY?"
HOW CAN HE SAY THAT WHEN HE KNOWS NOTHING?
I ALWAYS FAIL TO PROTECT SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
LOOK, IT'S OVER THERE!
WHAT AN IDIOT.
YOU JERK!
THAT'S WHAT HAP... THAT DAY, TOO.
COME ON, GIVE IT BACK!
BECAUSE I'M NOT STR...
THAT'S A VERY...
I'M NOT STR...
...VERY IMPORTANT THING THIES GAVE ME.
O SYLPHID THE WIND SPIRIT.
GIVE IT BACK! THAT MEANS A LOT TO ME.
OH, NO!
WHAT'S THIS?
HEY.
CLINK
...THOUT IT...
THROB
THROB
REST OF THE WORDS FADED AWAY.
Aha?
DON'T GET UPTIGHT OVER A MEASLY PIECE OF JEWELRY.
JINGLE
IF IT MEANS A LOT TO YOU, WHY DON'T YOU COME AND GET IT?
BWAHAHA! YOU'RE TERRIBLE. HE LOOKS WEAK, DARWELL.
THROB
...MEASLY?
HEAR THESE SILENT SCREAMS INSIDE OF ME?

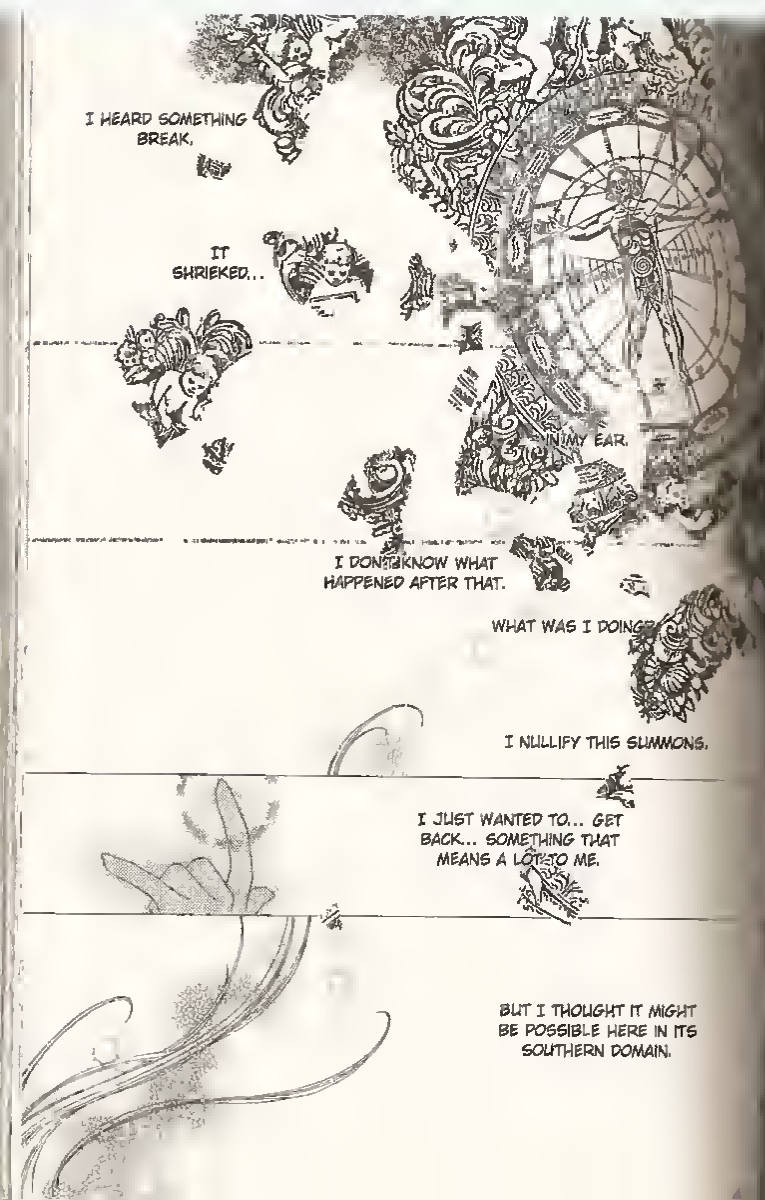
WAHHH!
CHRIS?
GIVE IT BACK, NOW!
GIVE IT BACK TO ME BEFORE I FINISH CHANTING THE SPELL.
O BEAUTIFUL WHITE HORSE GALLOPING IN THE BLUE SKY.
CH-CHRIS?
GIVE ME YOUR MIGHTY POWER.
O GREAT SEITEI DRIFTING WITH THE SONG OF THE SPRING WIND, GRANT MY WISH AND SHOW YOURSELF.

"DON'T TOUCH HIM WITH DIRTY HANDS!"
EH?
WHAT'S HAPPENING?
D-DARWELL!
THIS IS A BAD SIGN!
"I WISH... YOU WOULD ALL DISAPPEAR!"
TH-THE WIND...
OUCH!!
Argh!
WAHH!
"DON'T TOUCH HIM!"

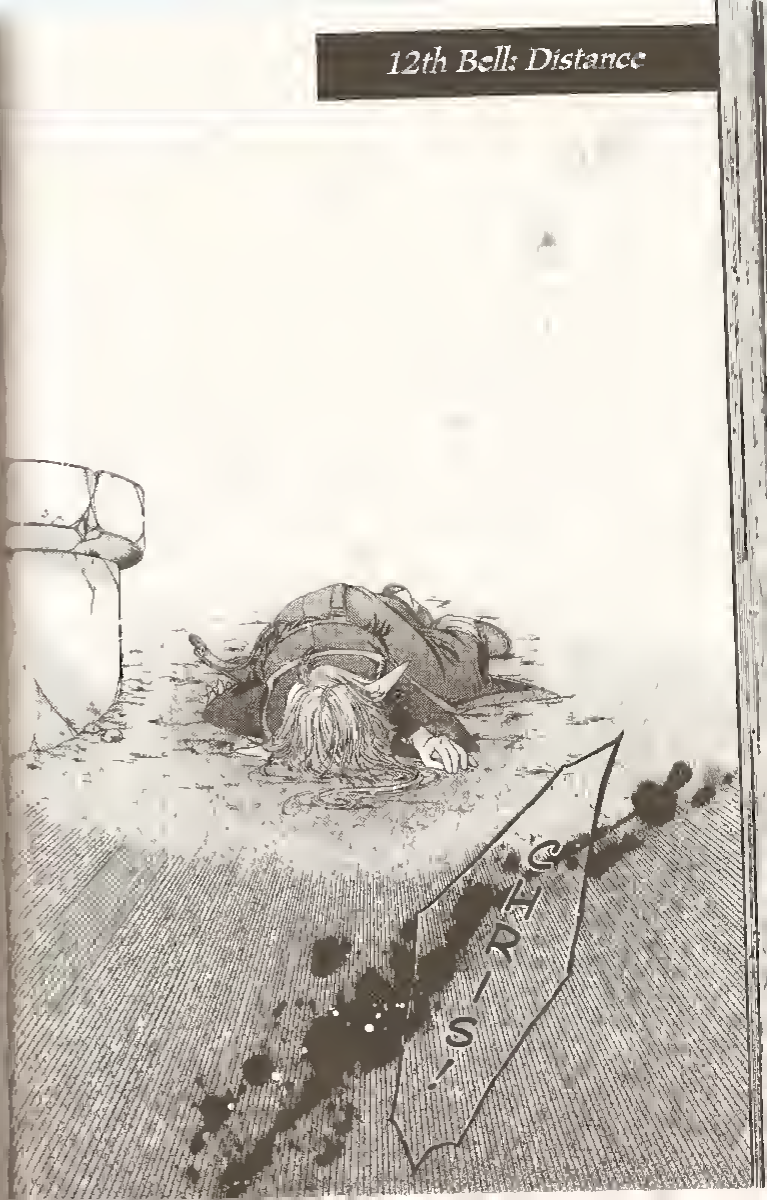
I'M SORRY, THIES.
SAY THAT AGAIN?!
LIAR!
I WAS GOING TO THROW IT BACK AT HIM, BUT THE CHAIN GOT CAUGHT ON MY FINGER BECAUSE OF A STRONG GUST!
NO!
Ack!
WHY DID YOU TOSS IT OUT THERE?
Hey, you!
HURL
UH-OH!
HEEY!
IT'S THE PRIEST LEVEL OF AN ADVANCED SUMMONING MAGIC!!
IT SUMMONS THE SUPERIOR WIND SPIRIT.
HAH?!
I'VE HEARD ABOUT THIS FROM MY GRANDPA BEFORE!
ABOUT THAT SPELL!
CH-CHRIS, STOP IT!
A-A PROFESSOR SAID YOU CAN'T USE MAGIC WITH YOUR EMOTIONS.
No way!
P-PRIEST LEVEL?!
WHY? HE'S A FIRST-YEAR LIKE US.
JUST GIVE IT BACK TO HIM!
YEAH, YOU SHOULD GIVE IT BACK.
CHRIS?
...?
HERE...
ALL RIGHT, I'LL GIVE IT BACK TO HIM!
Ah, darn it!

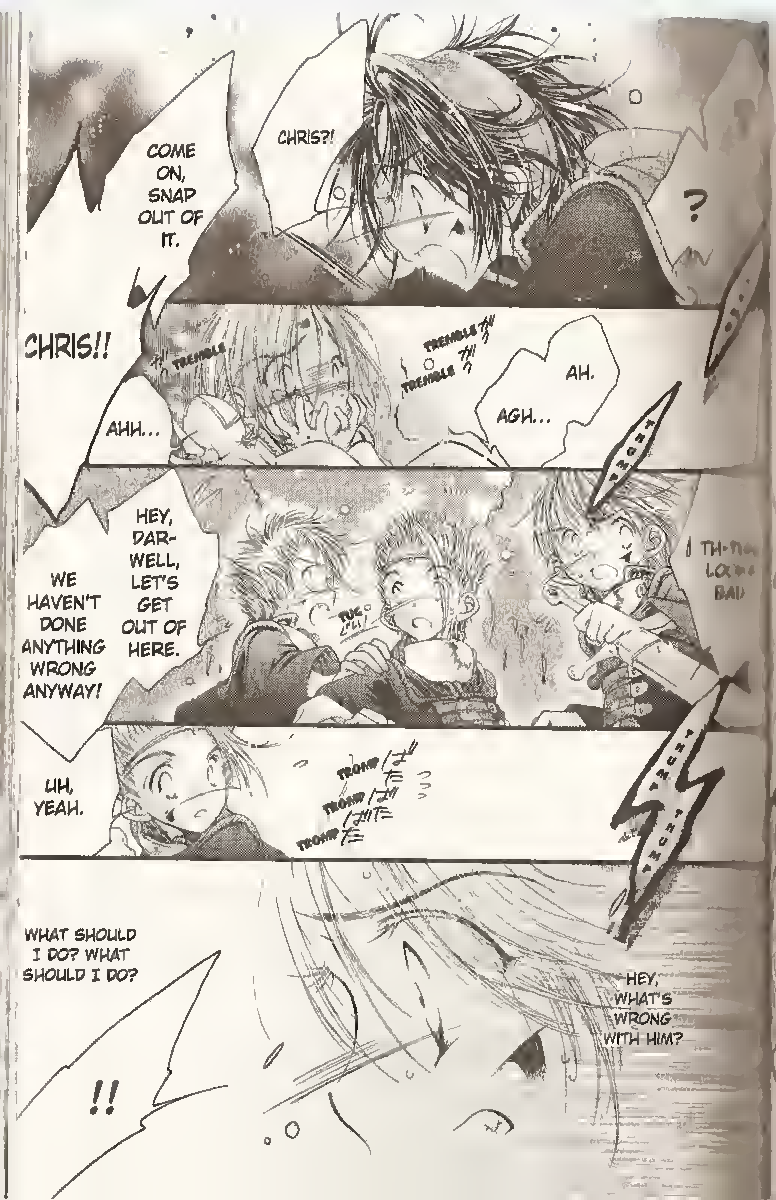
I KNEW...

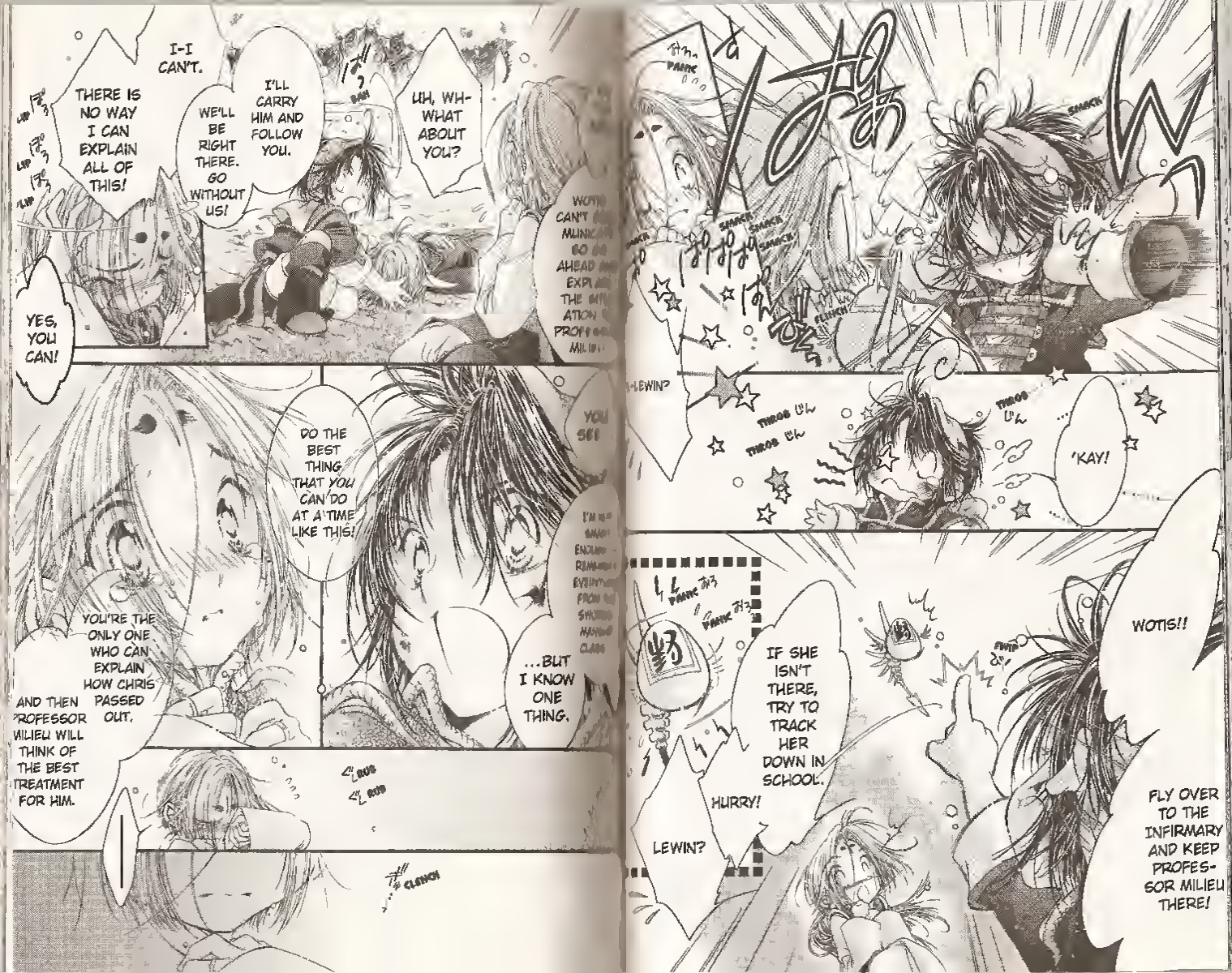
...THERE IS NO STRENGTH LIKE LEWIN'S IN ME.

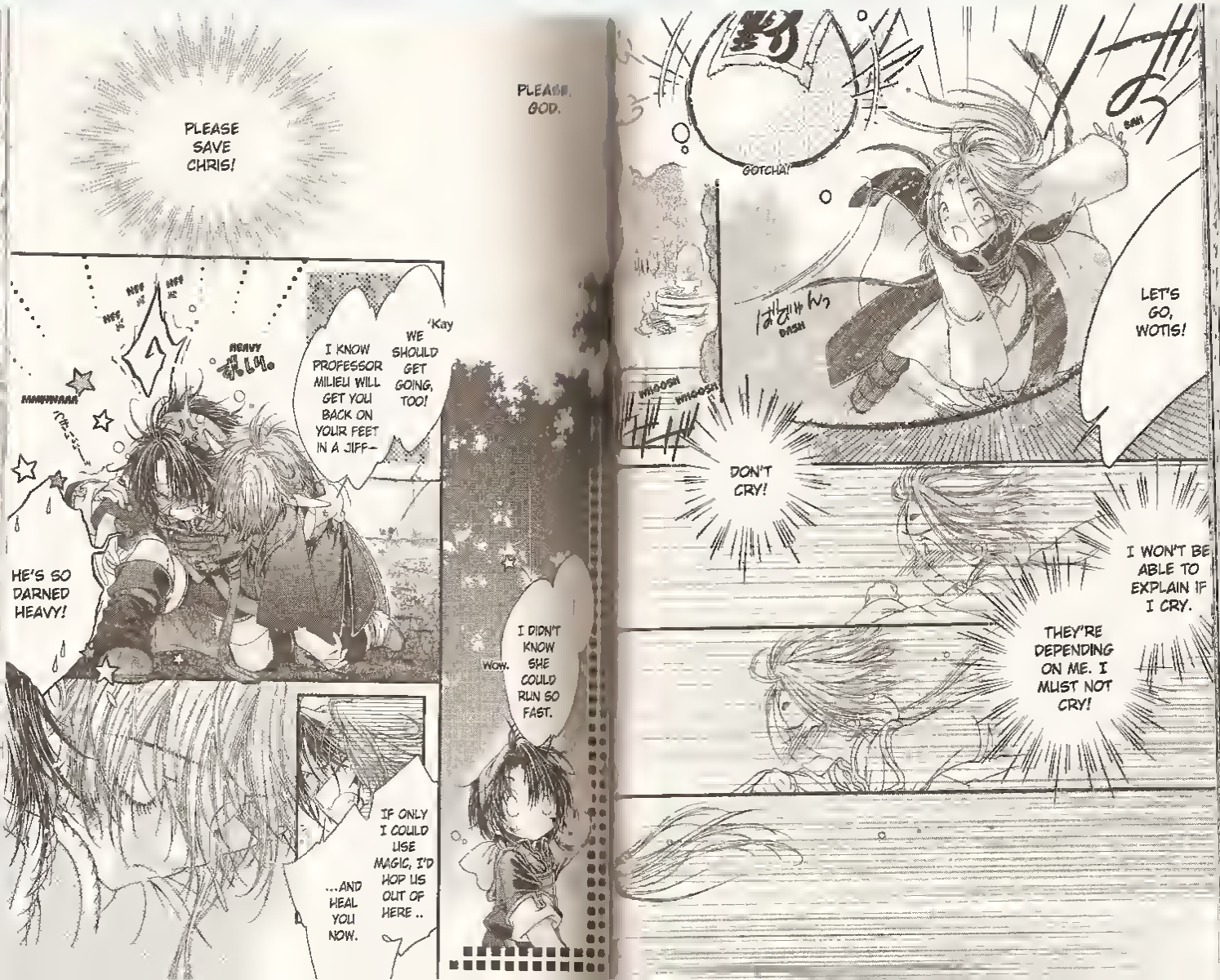

I HEARD SOMETHING BREAK.
IT SHRIEKED...
IN MY EAR.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT.
WHAT WAS I DOING?
I NULLIFY THIS SUMMONS.
I JUST WANTED TO... GET BACK... SOMETHING THAT MEANS A LOT TO ME.
BUT I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE HERE IN ITS SOUTHERN DOMAIN.

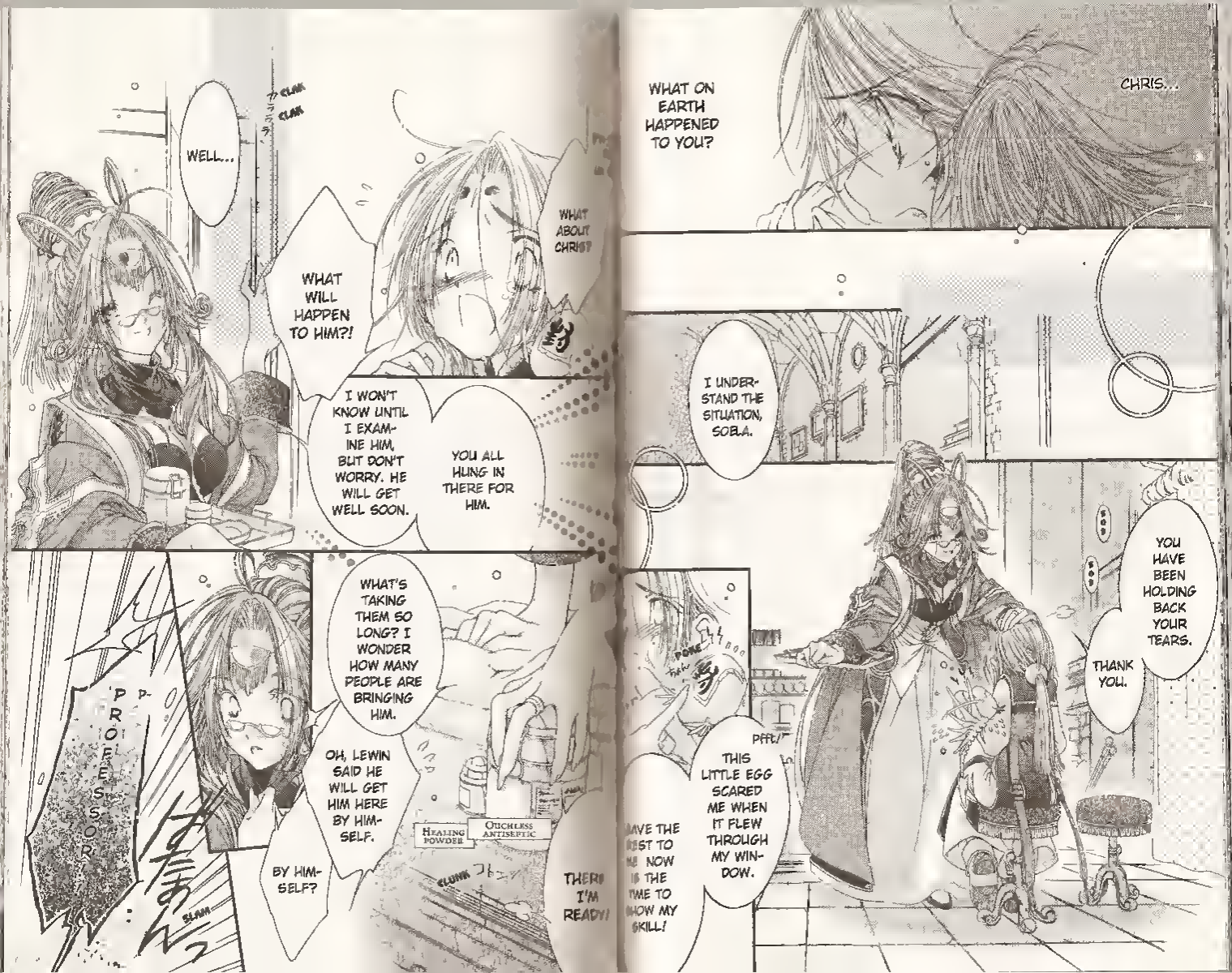
CHRIS-
CHRIS-
T
T
T
TSUU
TMP
WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
SOWA
Hey!
TUC
ARE YOU ALL...
ARE YOU FEELING SICK, CHRIS?
AND THEN HE SUDDENLY PASSED OUT. I FREAKED OUT AND LET HIM GO.
I-I'M NOT SURE EITHER. I CALLED HIS NAME BUT... HE WOULDN'T RESPOND

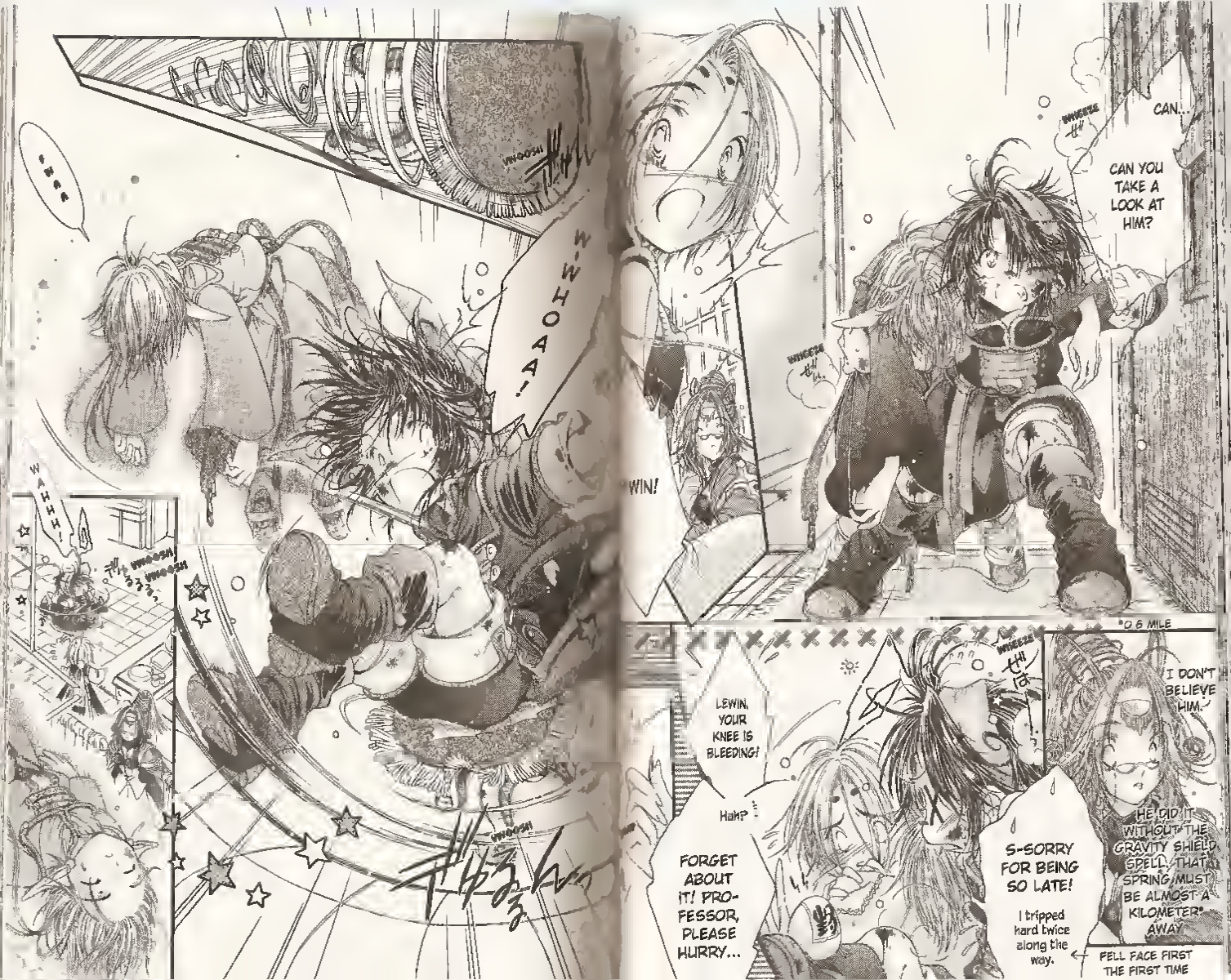

CHRIS-


COME ON, SNAP OUT OF IT.
CHRIS?!
?
CHRIS!!
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
AHH...
AH.
AGH...
HEY, DAR-WELL, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.
WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING WRONG ANYWAY!
UH, YEAH.
TROMP
TROMP
TROMP
WHAT SHOULD I DO? WHAT SHOULD I DO?
!!
HEY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?


I-I CAN'T.
THERE IS NO WAY I CAN EXPLAIN ALL OF THIS!
I'LL CARRY HIM AND FOLLOW YOU.
WE'LL BE RIGHT THERE. GO WITHOUT US!
UH, WH-WHAT ABOUT YOU?
YES, YOU CAN!
DO THE BEST THING THAT YOU CAN DO AT A TIME LIKE THIS!
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN EXPLAIN HOW CHRIS PASSED OUT.
AND THEN PROFESSOR MILIEU WILL THINK OF THE BEST TREATMENT FOR HIM.
...BUT I KNOW ONE THING.
CLENCH
SMACK
SMACK SMACK SMACK
LEWIN?
'KAY!
IF SHE ISN'T THERE, TRY TO TRACK HER DOWN IN SCHOOL.
HURRY!
LEWIN?
WOTIS!!
FLY OVER TO THE INFIRMARY AND KEEP PROFESSOR MILIEU THERE!

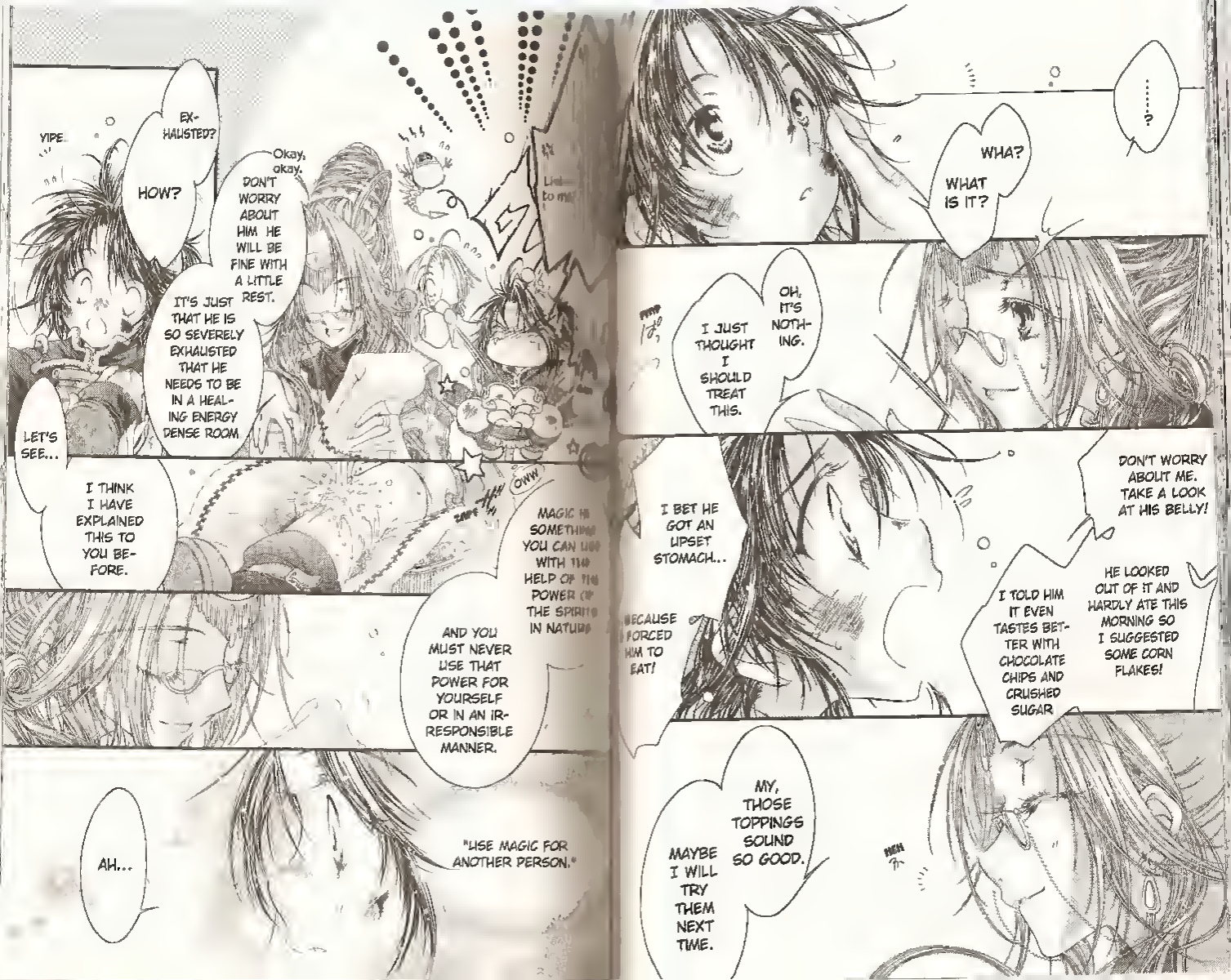

PLEASE SAVE CHRIS!
PLEASE, GOD.
HEF HE
HEF HE
HEAVY
MMMMMM
I KNOW PROFESSOR MILIEU WILL GET YOU BACK ON YOUR FEET IN A JIFF–
'Kay WE SHOULD GET GOING, TOO!
HE'S SO DARNED HEAVY!
...AND HEAL YOU NOW.
IF ONLY I COULD USE MAGIC, I'D HOP US OUT OF HERE ..
WOW.
I DIDN'T KNOW SHE COULD RUN SO FAST.
GOTCHA!
BAM
DASH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
LET'S GO, WOTIS!
DON'T CRY!
I WON'T BE ABLE TO EXPLAIN IF I CRY.
THEY'RE DEPENDING ON ME. I MUST NOT CRY!

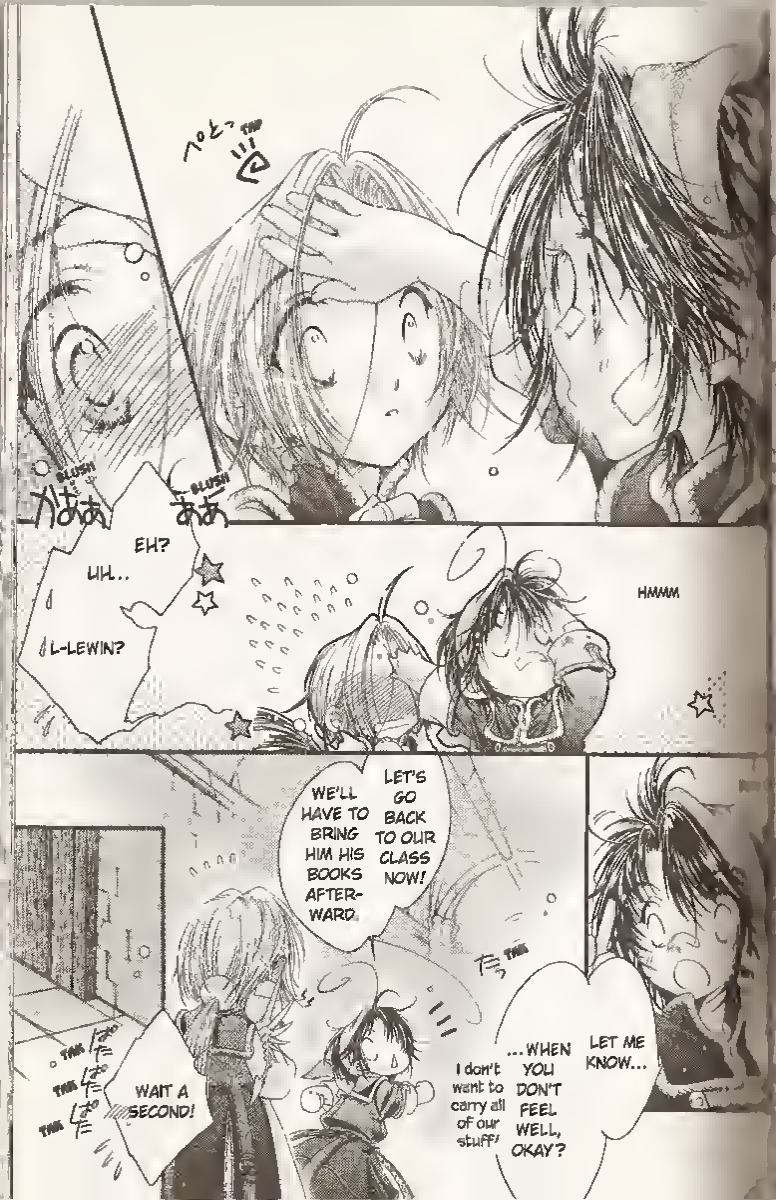

WELL...
CLANK
CLANK
WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM?!
WHAT ABOUT CHRIS?
I WON'T KNOW UNTIL I EXAMINE HIM, BUT DON'T WORRY. HE WILL GET WELL SOON.
YOU ALL HUNG IN THERE FOR HIM.
WHAT'S TAKING THEM SO LONG? I WONDER HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE BRINGING HIM.
OH, LEWIN SAID HE WILL GET HIM HERE BY HIMSELF.
BY HIMSELF?
HEALING POWDER
OUCHLESS ANTISEPTIC
CLUNK
THERE! I'M READY!
P-
PROFESSOR!
SLAM
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED TO YOU?
CHRIS...
I UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION, SOBA.
YOU HAVE BEEN HOLDING BACK YOUR TEARS.
THANK YOU.
SOB
SOB
PONE
PFFT/
THIS LITTLE EGG SCARED ME WHEN IT FLEW THROUGH MY WINDOW.
HAVE THE REST TO ME NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW MY SKILL!


WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH

HEY, PROFESSOR!
PROFESSOR!
HOW'S CHRIS?
UH...
LOOK AT THIS, NICK. I GUESS YOU GOT IT FROM KAMAITACHI.
!?

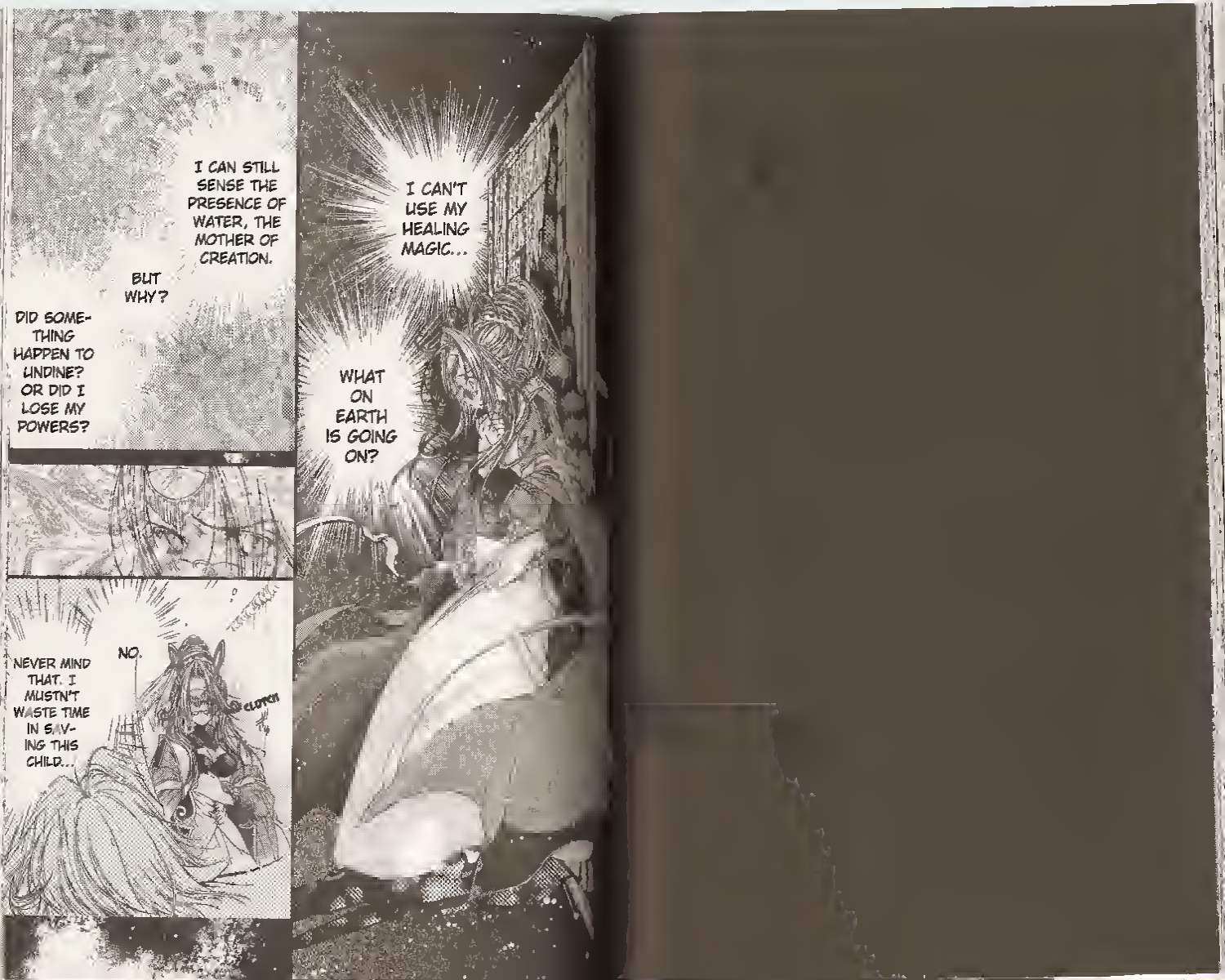
AHHH!
CHRIS!
CAN YOU HEAR ME?
CHRIS COTTON-BURG!
OH, NO! NOT ONLY IS HE UNCONSCIOUS, HE IS IN A DEEP COMA!
IF SO, THIS LITTLE BOY'S POWER WILL SOON BE DRAINED, AFFECTING HIS MENTAL STRENGTH!
ANYWAY, I MUST STABILIZE HIS LIFE-LINE WITH HEALING MAGIC..
COULD HE BE LOSING HIS POWER FROM MAGIC FAILURE?
SOELA SAID HE COLLAPSED IN THE MIDDLE OF A SUMMONING.

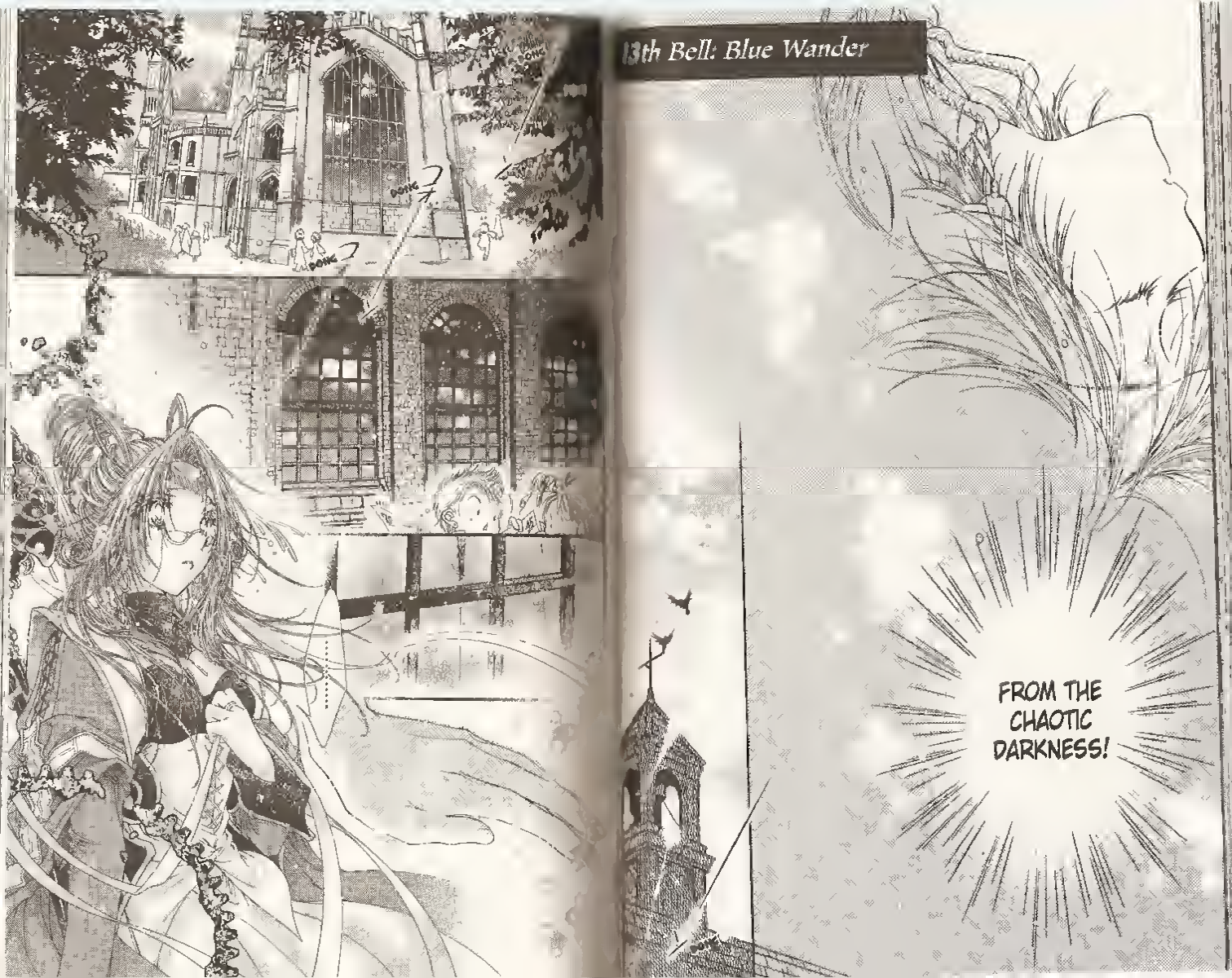

?
WHA?
WHAT IS IT?
OH, IT'S NOTHING.
I JUST THOUGHT I SHOULD TREAT THIS.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. TAKE A LOOK AT HIS BELLY!
HE LOOKED OUT OF IT AND HARDLY ATE THIS MORNING SO I SUGGESTED SOME CORN FLAKES!
I TOLD HIM IT EVEN TASTES BETTER WITH CHOCOLATE CHIPS AND CRUSHED SUGAR
I BET HE GOT AN UPSET STOMACH...
BECAUSE I FORCED HIM TO EAT!
MY, THOSE TOPPINGS SOUND SO GOOD.
MAYBE I WILL TRY THEM NEXT TIME.
YIPE.
EXHAUSTED?
HOW?
Okay, okay.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM HE WILL BE FINE WITH A LITTLE REST.
IT'S JUST THAT HE IS SO SEVERELY EXHAUSTED THAT HE NEEDS TO BE IN A HEALING ENERGY DENSE ROOM
LET'S SEE...
I THINK I HAVE EXPLAINED THIS TO YOU BEFORE.
MAGIC IS SOMETHING YOU CAN USE WITH THE HELP OF THE POWER OF THE SPIRITS IN NATURE
AND YOU MUST NEVER USE THAT POWER FOR YOURSELF OR IN AN IRRESPONSIBLE MANNER.
"USE MAGIC FOR ANOTHER PERSON."
AH...


BLUSH
BLUSH
EH?
UH...
L-LEWIN?
HMMM
WE'LL HAVE TO BRING HIM HIS BOOKS AFTER-WARD.
LET'S GO BACK TO OUR CLASS NOW!
WAIT A SECOND!
I don't want to carry all of our stuff!
...WHEN YOU DON'T FEEL WELL, OKAY?
LET ME KNOW...

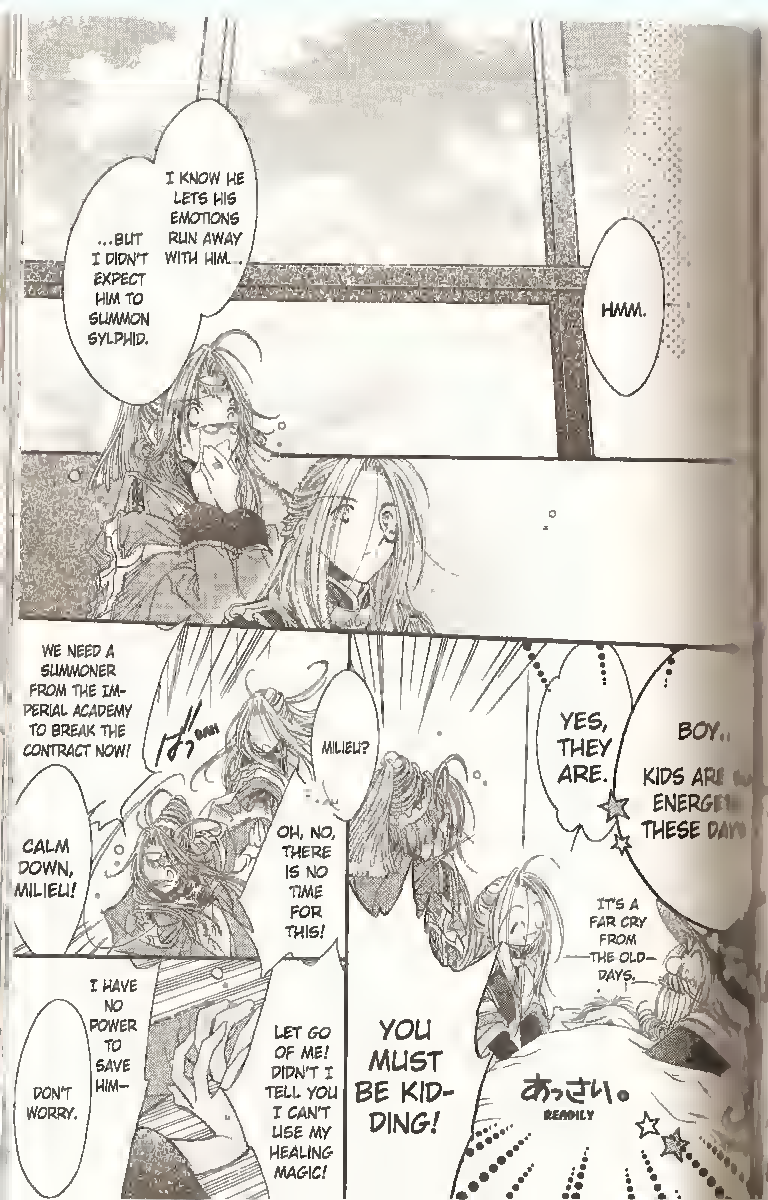
CLINK
I'M NOT SURE WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED.
RIGHT
MY GRANNY TOLD ME THE SAME THING.
THAT SPIRITS WON'T RESPOND TO THOSE FEELINGS
REMEMBER THAT MAGIC CAN BE FRIGHTENING AT TIMES.
UH, OKAY.
NOW...
LEAVE THE REST UP TO ME AND GO BACK TO YOUR CLASSES.
YOU KNOW, LEWIN
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE CORN FLAKES. I HAD SOME TOO AND SEE? I'M PERFECTLY FINE.

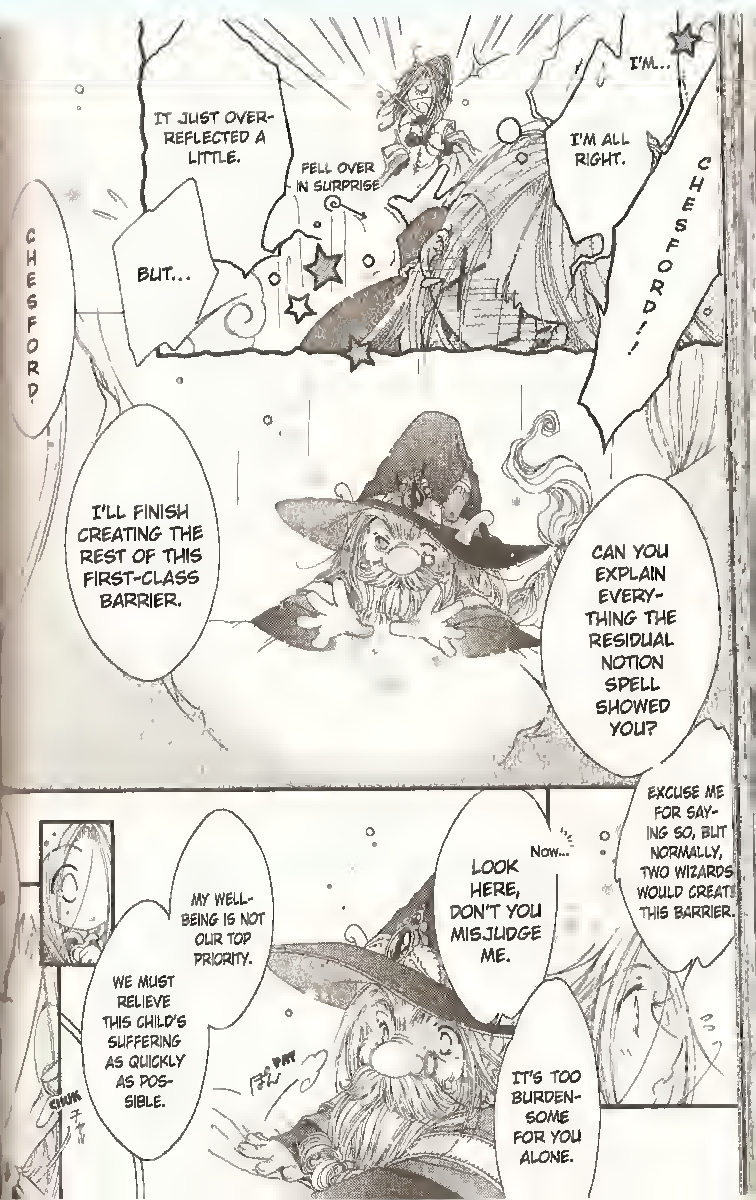
I CAN'T USE MY HEALING MAGIC...
THIS AN'T BE RUE!

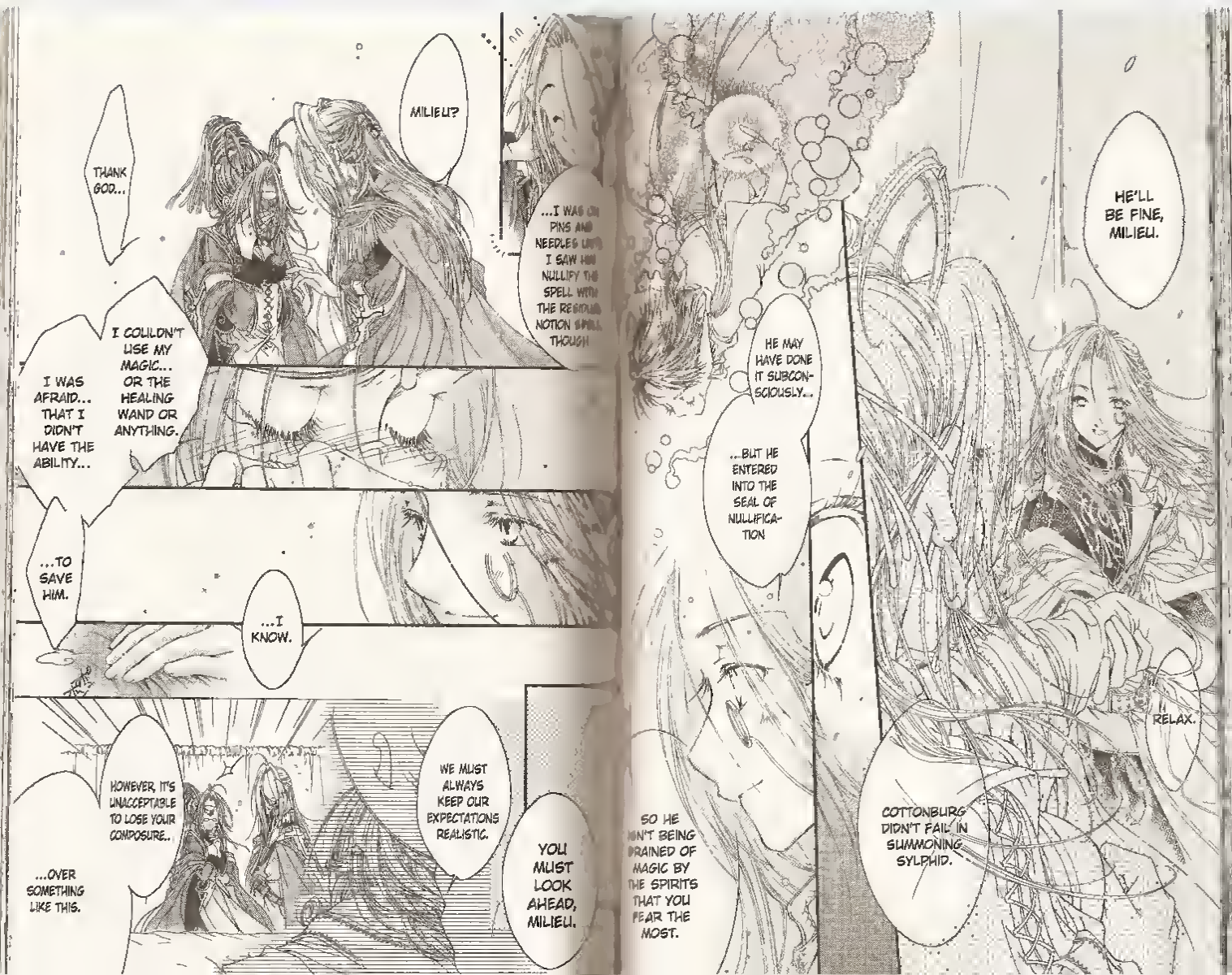

I CAN STILL SENSE THE PRESENCE OF WATER, THE MOTHER OF CREATION.
BUT WHY?
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO UNDINE? OR DID I LOSE MY POWERS?
I CAN'T USE MY HEALING MAGIC...
WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON?
NO.
CLUTCH
NEVER MIND THAT. I MUSTN'T WASTE TIME IN SAVING THIS CHILD...


13th Bell: Blue Wander
DONG
DONG
DONG
FROM THE CHAOTIC DARKNESS!

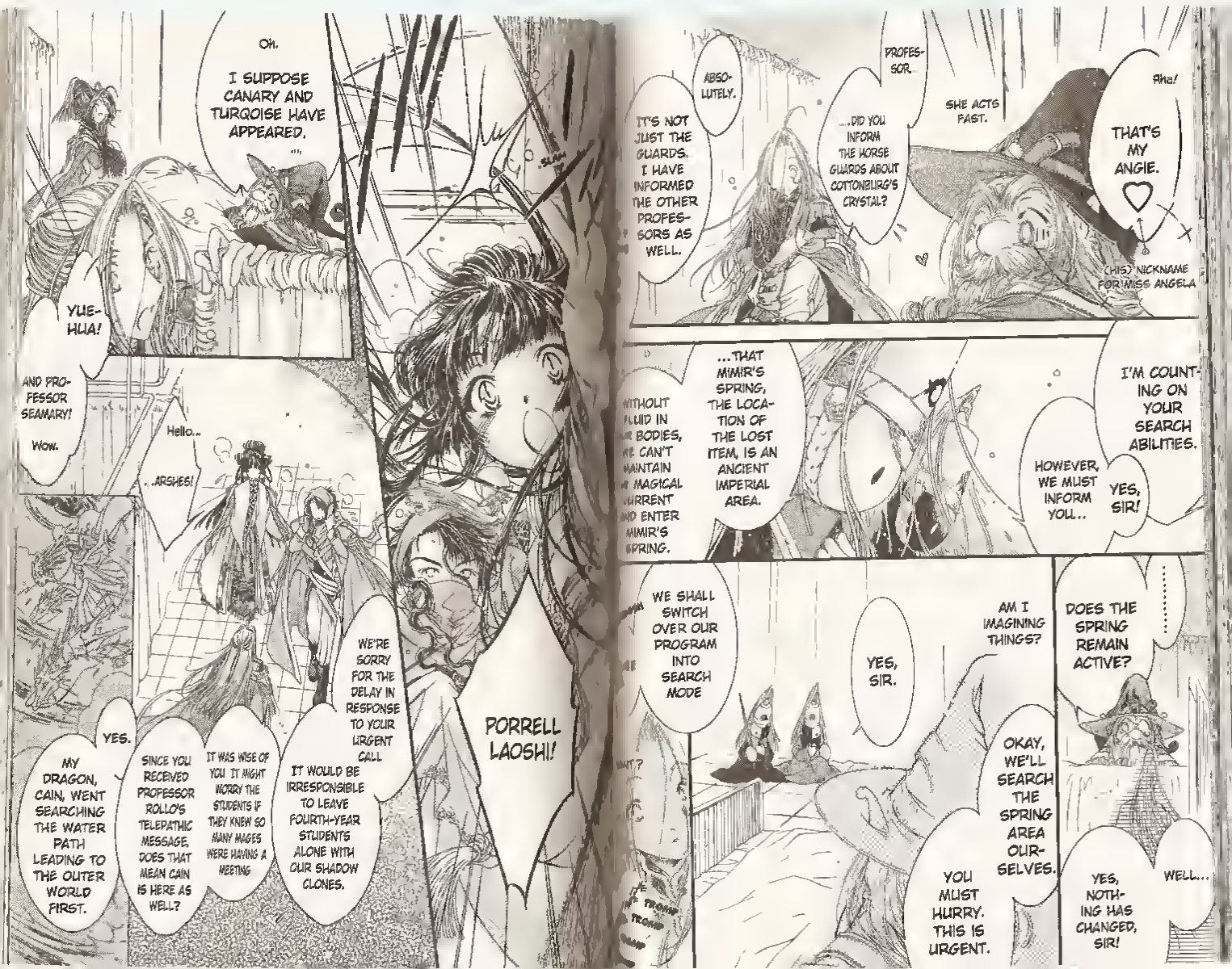
PEEP
PEEP
PEEP
PEEP
PEEP PEEP
FLASH
FROOOSH
...!?

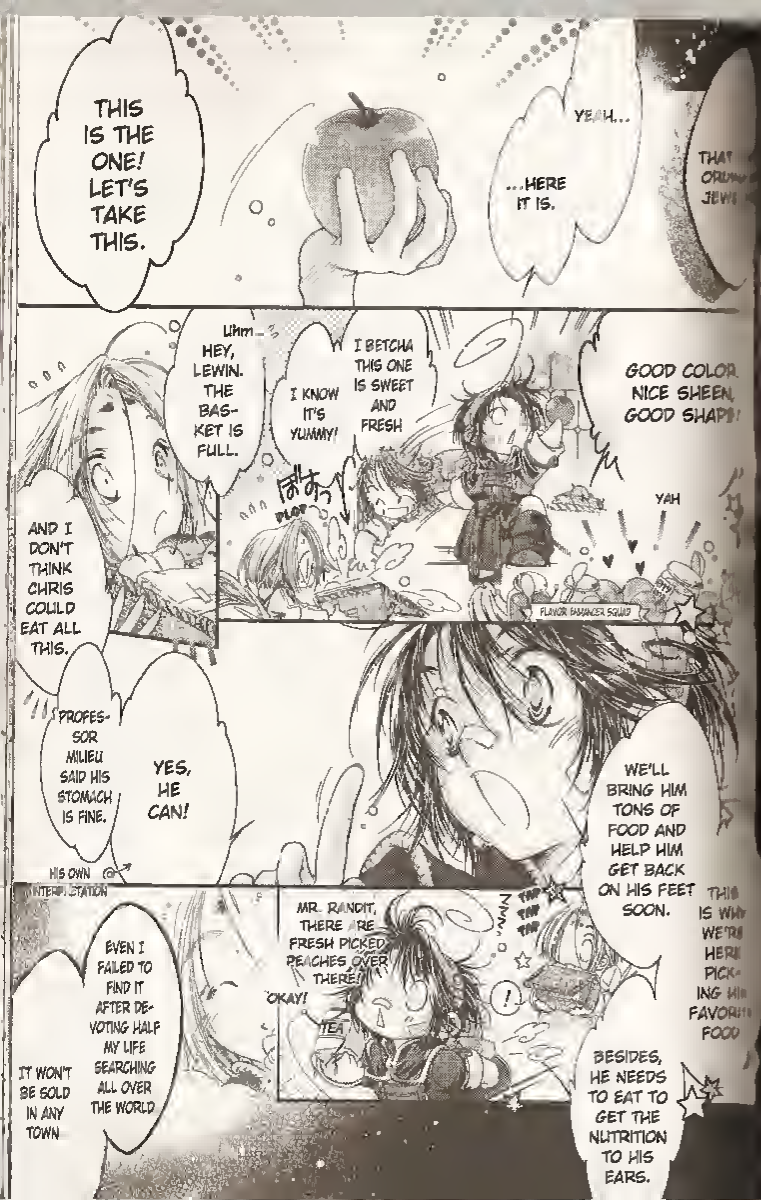

I KNOW HE LETS HIS EMOTIONS RUN AWAY WITH HIM...
...BUT I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO SUMMON SYLPHID.
HMM.
WE NEED A SUMMONER FROM THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY TO BREAK THE CONTRACT NOW!
MILIEU?
YES, THEY ARE.
BOY.. KIDS ARE ENERGE... THESE DAYS
CALM DOWN, MILIEU!
OH, NO, THERE IS NO TIME FOR THIS!
IT'S A FAR CRY FROM —THE OLD— DAYS.
I HAVE NO POWER TO SAVE HIM—
DON'T WORRY.
LET GO OF ME! DIDN'T I TELL YOU I CAN'T USE MY HEALING MAGIC!
YOU MUST BE KIDDING!
あっさい。
READILY


I'M...
I'M ALL RIGHT.
CHESFORD!!
FELL OVER IN SURPRISE
IT JUST OVER-REFLECTED A LITTLE.
BUT...
CHESFORD.
I'LL FINISH CREATING THE REST OF THIS FIRST-CLASS BARRIER.
CAN YOU EXPLAIN EVERYTHING THE RESIDUAL NOTION SPELL SHOWED YOU?
EXCUSE ME FOR SAYING SO, BUT NORMALLY, TWO WIZARDS WOULD CREATE THIS BARRIER.
Now...
LOOK HERE, DON'T YOU MISJUDGE ME.
MY WELL-BEING IS NOT OUR TOP PRIORITY.
WE MUST RELIEVE THIS CHILD'S SUFFERING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.
IT'S TOO BURDENSOME FOR YOU ALONE.


HE'LL BE FINE, MILIEU.
RELAX.
COTTONBURG DIDN'T FAIL IN SUMMONING SYLPHID.
HE MAY HAVE DONE IT SUBCONSCIOUSLY...
...BUT HE ENTERED INTO THE SEAL OF NULLIFICATION
SO HE ISN'T BEING DRAINED OF MAGIC BY THE SPIRITS THAT YOU FEAR THE MOST.
MILIEU?
...I WAS ON PINS AND NEEDLES UNTIL I SAW HIM NULLIFY THE SPELL WITH THE REGULAR NOTION SPELL THOUGH
THANK GOD...
I COULDN'T USE MY MAGIC... OR THE HEALING WAND OR ANYTHING.
I WAS AFRAID... THAT I DIDN'T HAVE THE ABILITY...
...TO SAVE HIM.
...I KNOW.
HOWEVER, IT'S UNACCEPTABLE TO LOSE YOUR COMPOSURE..
...OVER SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
WE MUST ALWAYS KEEP OUR EXPECTATIONS REALISTIC.
YOU MUST LOOK AHEAD, MILIEU.

PLEASE SAY I'M KIND TO WOMEN.
I'M TELLING YOU, YOU'RE SOFT ON WOMEN!
POUT
STILL...
I'M NOT BLAMING HER. I HAVEN'T GONE SENILE YET!
I KNOW, I KNOW!
PROFESSOR, MILIEU WASN'T--
YOU REALLY DIDN'T NOTICE ANYTHING WRONG WITH YOURSELF UNTIL THEN?
NO.
AT FIRST, I BELIEVED I WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF A SUMMONING...
...BUT THERE WAS STILL NO RESPONSE WHEN I TRIED IT ON ANOTHER STUDENT.
I FELT THAT THE BED SHIELD WOULDN'T BE SUFFICIENT TO DETER THE SPIRIT'S INFLUENCE, SO I CONTACTED YOU
THE HEALING WAND COULDN'T TRIGGER MY POWER, EITHER.
I EMPOWERED A GEM IN AQUARIUS'S HOLY ROD SO THAT IT COULD BE USED AFTER DEPLETION OF HER POWER.
AND I FELT THAT ALL HEALING-RELATED, RATHER THAN WATER-RELATED, POWER IS PARALYZED.
THE HEALING WAND I CREATED IS THE PROBLEM
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO THE SPRING?
HOLD IT!
BUT WE HAVE NO TIME.
SOMEONE IS TELEPORTING HERE.
WHOOSH
AND I AM A MEMBER OF THE SECOND NIGHT HORSE CAVALRY.
EXCUSE US FOR INTERRUPTING.
I AM THE CAPTAIN OF THE SECOND DAY HORSE CAVALRY.
WE ARE HERE UNDER MISS ANGELA'S COMMAND, SIR.
WHOOOSH
ONLY ONE WOMAN COULD PULL OFF SUCH A STUNT.
WHAT?

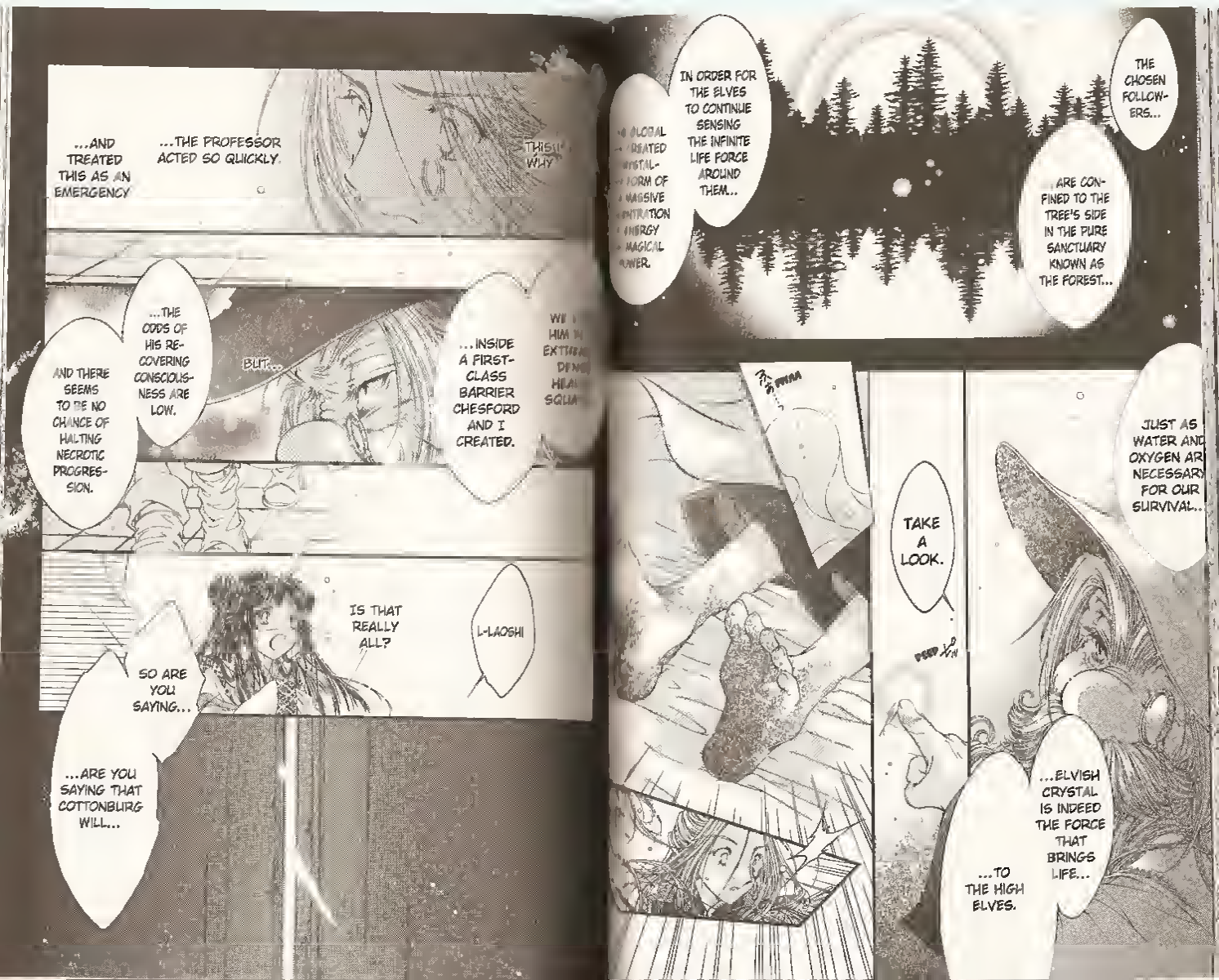

Oh.
I SUPPOSE CANARY AND TURQUOISE HAVE APPEARED.
...
SLAM
YUE-HUA!
AND PROFESSOR SEAMARY!
Wow.
Hello..
..ARSHES!
PORRELL LAOSHI!
YES.
MY DRAGON, CAIN, WENT SEARCHING THE WATER PATH LEADING TO THE OUTER WORLD FIRST.
SINCE YOU RECEIVED PROFESSOR ROLLO'S TELEPATHIC MESSAGE, DOES THAT MEAN CAIN IS HERE AS WELL?
IT WAS WISE OF YOU IT MIGHT WORRY THE STUDENTS IF THEY KNEW SO MANY MAGES WERE HAVING A MEETING
IT WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE TO LEAVE FOURTH-YEAR STUDENTS ALONE WITH OUR SHADOW CLONES.
WE'RE SORRY FOR THE DELAY IN RESPONSE TO YOUR URGENT CALL
ABSOLUTELY.
IT'S NOT JUST THE GUARDS. I HAVE INFORMED THE OTHER PROFESSORS AS WELL.
PROFESSOR.
...DID YOU INFORM THE HORSE GUARDS ABOUT COTTONBURG'S CRYSTAL?
SHE ACTS FAST.
Aha!
THAT'S MY ANGIE.
(HIS) NICKNAME FOR MISS ANGELA
WITHOUT FLUID IN BODIES, WE CAN'T MAINTAIN MAGICAL CURRENT AND ENTER MIMIR'S SPRING.
...THAT MIMIR'S SPRING, THE LOCATION OF THE LOST ITEM, IS AN ANCIENT IMPERIAL AREA.
HOWEVER, WE MUST INFORM YOU..
I'M COUNTING ON YOUR SEARCH ABILITIES.
YES, SIR!
WE SHALL SWITCH OVER OUR PROGRAM INTO SEARCH MODE
YES, SIR.
AM I IMAGINING THINGS?
DOES THE SPRING REMAIN ACTIVE?
.....
OKAY, WE'LL SEARCH THE SPRING AREA OURSELVES.
YOU MUST HURRY. THIS IS URGENT.
YES, NOTHING HAS CHANGED, SIR!
WELL...


THIS IS THE ONE! LET'S TAKE THIS.
YEAH...
...HERE IT IS.
THAT ORUNGE JEWE
UHM— HEY, LEWIN. THE BASKET IS FULL.
I KNOW IT'S YUMMY!
I BETCHA THIS ONE IS SWEET AND FRESH
GOOD COLOR, NICE SHEEN, GOOD SHAPE!
ぽぉっ
PLOP
YAH
FLAVOR ENHANCER SQUID
AND I DON'T THINK CHRIS COULD EAT ALL THIS.
PROFESSOR MILIEU SAID HIS STOMACH IS FINE.
YES, HE CAN!
WE'LL BRING HIM TONS OF FOOD AND HELP HIM GET BACK ON HIS FEET SOON.
THIS IS WHY WE'RE HERE! PICKING HIS FAVORITE FOOD
HIS OWN INTERPRETATION
MR. BANDIT, THERE ARE FRESH PICKED PEACHES OVER THERE!
TIP TIP TIP
OKAY!
!
TEA
BESIDES, HE NEEDS TO EAT TO GET THE NUTRITION TO HIS EARS.
EVEN I FAILED TO FIND IT AFTER DEVOTING HALF MY LIFE SEARCHING ALL OVER THE WORLD
IT WON'T BE SOLD IN ANY TOWN

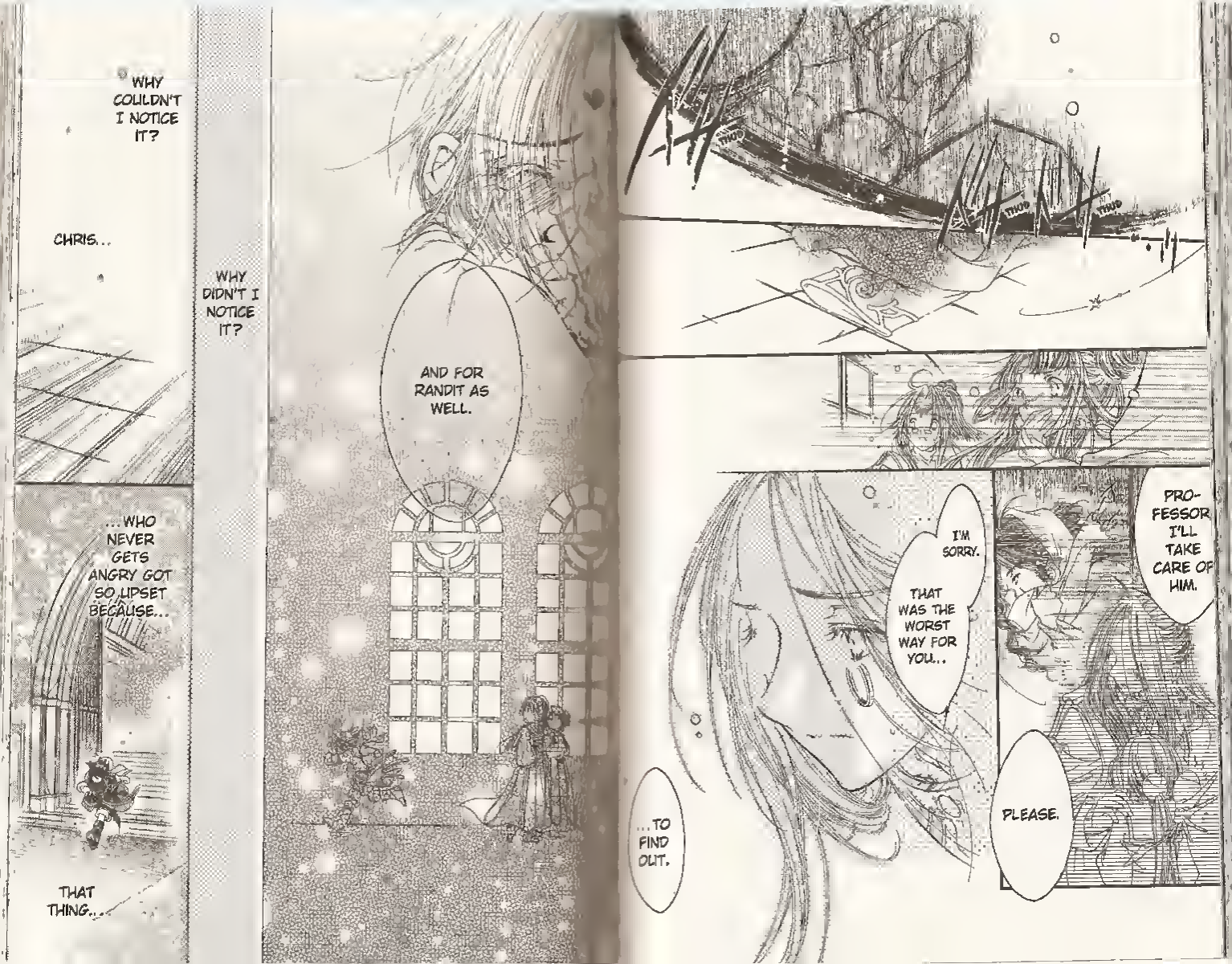
BETWEEN THAT BARRIER AND THE HOLES...
IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO LET IT GET WASHED DOWN THE WATER PATH TO THE OUTER WORLD...
I MADE THE REQUEST.
THE WATER PATH?
EXCUSE ME, LAOSHI. CAN YOU GIVE US MORE DETAILS ABOUT THIS CRYSTAL?
FWAH
FORGIVE ME FOR MY CLUELESSNESS.
WHY IS HE DOING ALL OF THIS?
IT'S NO USE.
I AGREE WITH HER AS WELL.
WE COULD OBTAIN ONE IMMEDIATELY IF YOU LIKE—
I KNOW A FEW SHOPS IN TOWN THAT CARRY REINFORCED CHARMS.
SHOULD WE MAKE A REASONABLE PREPARATION JUST IN CASE?
WE REALIZE THAT WHAT BROUGHT US TOGETHER IS MORE THAN A STUDENT'S LOST POSSESSION.

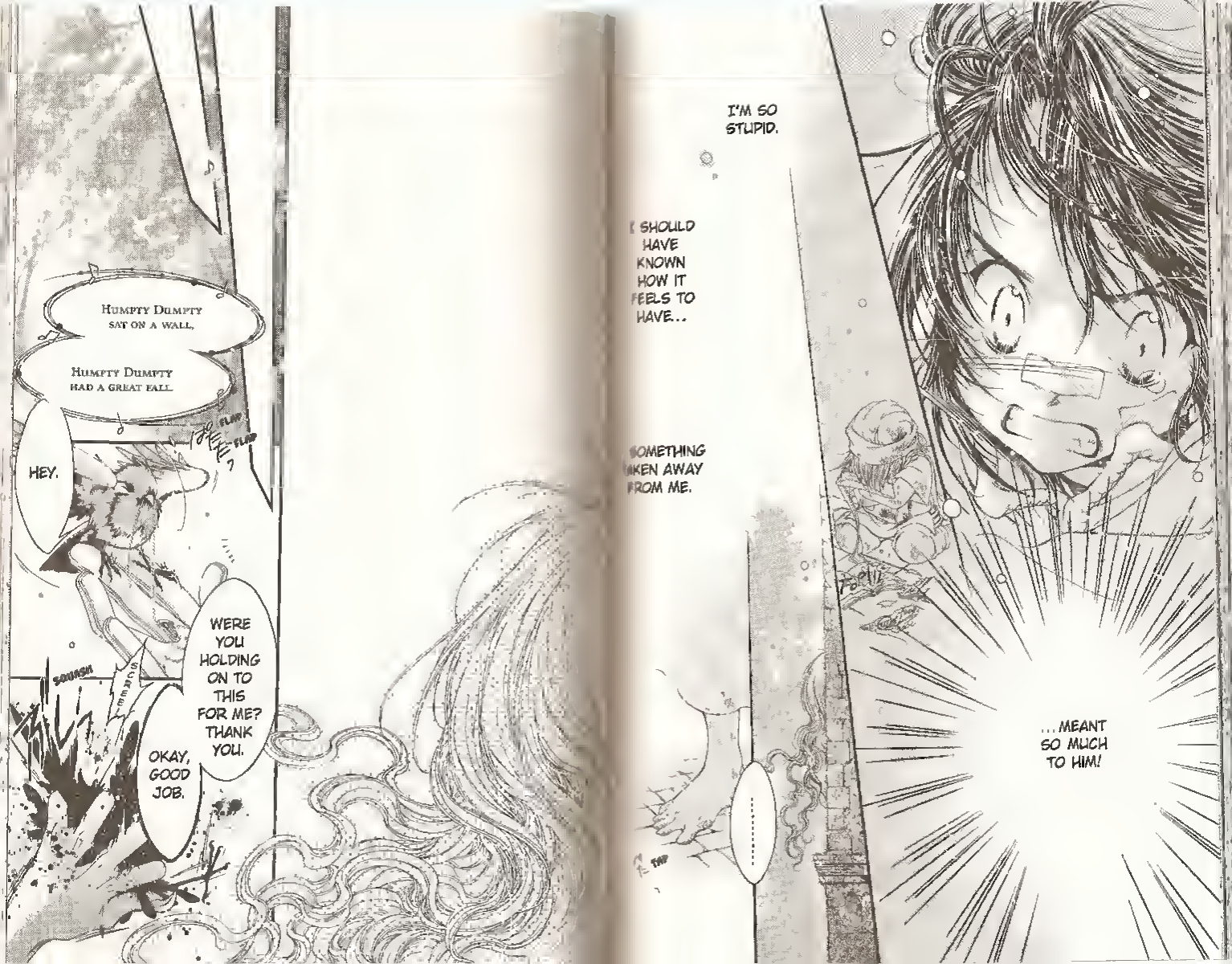
!!
THE GODS INFUSED IT WITH THEIR MAGICAL POWER SO THAT IT WILL NEVER WITHER.
AND PLANTED GREENERY TO MAKE THE AIR. THAT WAS THE GLOBAL TREE
...PROVIDED WATER AND LIGHT. .
...IN ORDER TO CREATE THE WORLD, ANCIENT GODS TORE THE DARKNESS DOWN, CREATED HEAVEN AND EARTH...
BECAUSE OF THE ELVES' EFFORTS TO PURIFY AN ALREADY PUREBRED STRAIN.
THE ELVES BRED ONLY AMONG THEMSELVES..
EVENTUALLY...
...THEIR DESCENDENTS INHERITED GREAT MAGICAL POWER— BUT ALSO PHYSICALLY FRAGILE BODIES.
CREATING A CLOSED SOCIETY THAT ISOLATES THEM FROM THE WORLD.
...CHOSE A FOLLOWER BOTH TO PROTECT IT— AND PRESERVE ETERNAL PEACE.
THAT FOLLOWER WAS THE ANCESTOR OF THE RACE KNOWN AS HIGH ELVES OF THE BELOVED FOREST LAND.

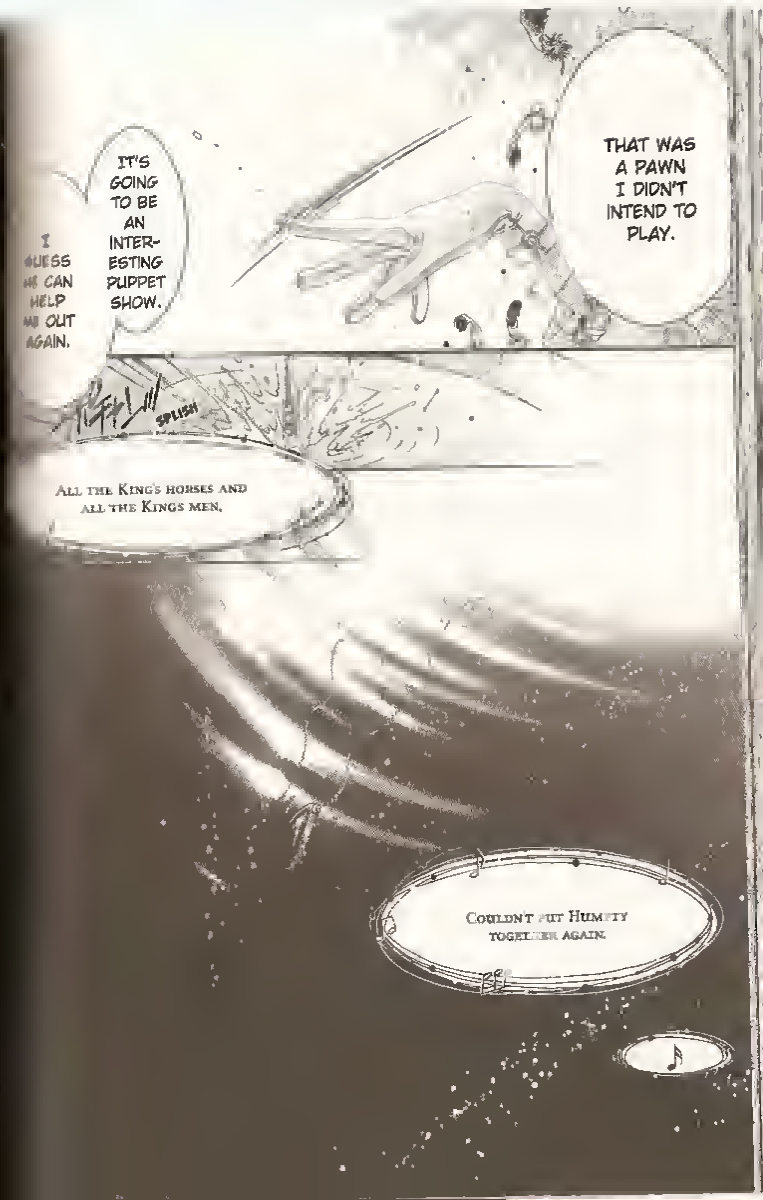
ISN'T AMBER..
CREATED WHEN TREE SAP FOSSILIZES OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME?
AMBER?
BY THE WAY...
...YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF AMBER, DON'T YOU?
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU MAY THINK THE ELF CRYSTAL THE CRYSTAL I NEED YOU TO FIND...
...CLOSELY RESEMBLES AMBER.
THE GLOBAL TREE IS ITS SOURCE.
BUT IT'S FROM A DIFFERENT TREE.
SEVERAL THOUSAND YEARS AGO, TREE SAP DRIPPED FROM CONIFEROUS TREES ONTO THE GROUND...
...AND EVENTUALLY ABSORBED THE EARTH'S ENERGY, SLOWLY CREATING THE AMBER.

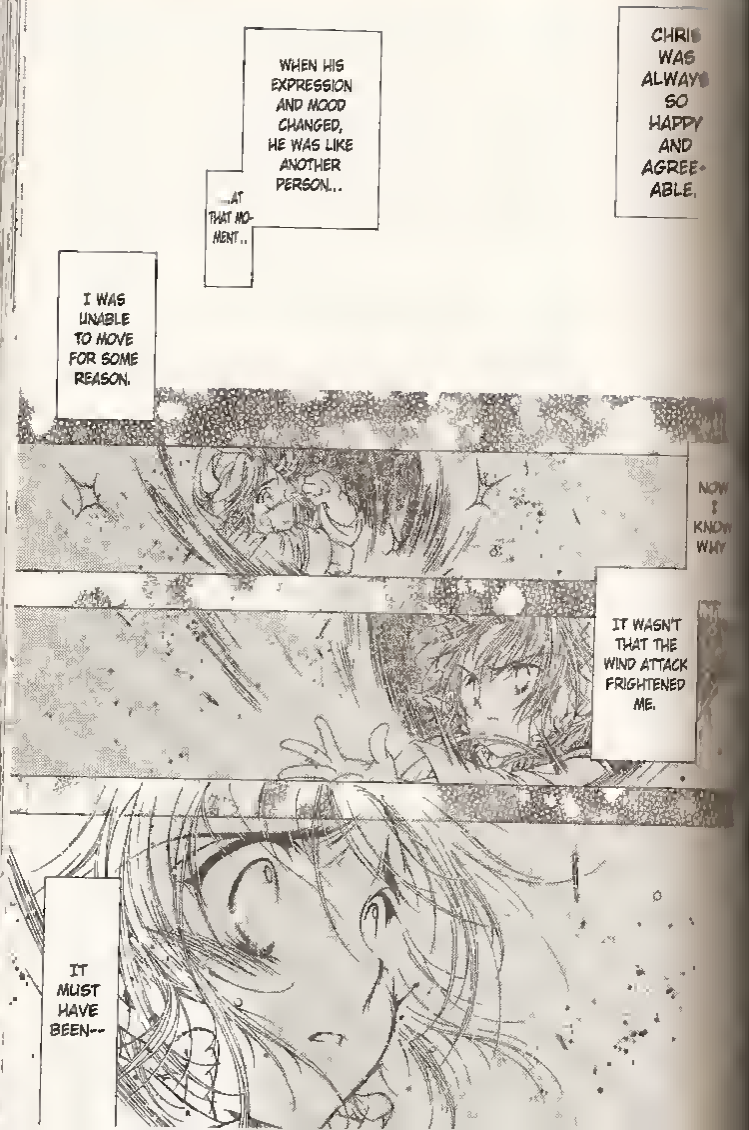

THE CHOSEN FOLLOW-ERS...
...ARE CONFINED TO THE TREE'S SIDE IN THE PURE SANCTUARY KNOWN AS THE FOREST...
IN ORDER FOR THE ELVES TO CONTINUE SENSING THE INFINITE LIFE FORCE AROUND THEM...
...A GLOBAL ...CREATED CRYSTAL-...FORM OF ...MASSIVE ...NTRATION ...NERGY ...MAGICAL ...OWER.
JUST AS WATER AND OXYGEN ARE NECESSARY FOR OUR SURVIVAL...
...ELVISH CRYSTAL IS INDEED THE FORCE THAT BRINGS LIFE...
...TO THE HIGH ELVES.
TAKE A LOOK.
...INSIDE A FIRST-CLASS BARRIER CHESFORD AND I CREATED.
...THE PROFESSOR ACTED SO QUICKLY.
...AND TREATED THIS AS AN EMERGENCY
THIS IS WHY
BUT...
...THE ODDS OF HIS RE-COVERING CONSCIOUS-NESS ARE LOW.
AND THERE SEEMS TO BE NO CHANCE OF HALTING NECROTIC PROGRES-SION.
L-LAOSHI
IS THAT REALLY ALL?
SO ARE YOU SAYING...
...ARE YOU SAYING THAT COTTONBURG WILL...

!!
YUENUA!
HI
BAM
BAM
...IT'S YOU...
EVEN-PORT...
...DIE IF HE DOESN'T GET HIS CRYSTAL BACK?!

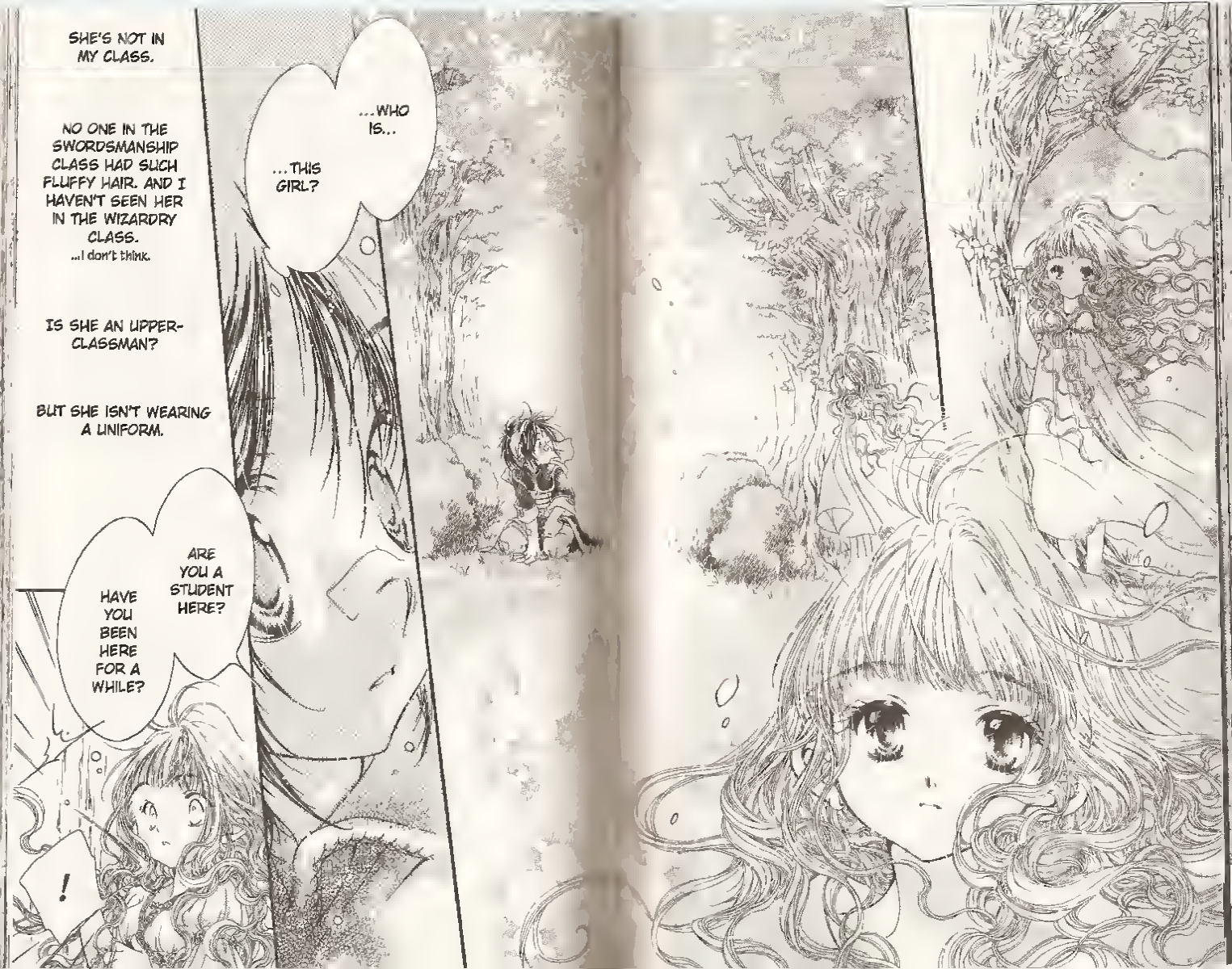

WHY COULDN'T I NOTICE IT?
CHRIS...
...WHO NEVER GETS ANGRY GOT SO UPSET BECAUSE...
THAT THING...
WHY DIDN'T I NOTICE IT?
AND FOR RANDIT AS WELL.
THUD
THUD
THUD
PRO-FESSOR I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM.
I'M SORRY.
THAT WAS THE WORST WAY FOR YOU...
PLEASE.
...TO FIND OUT.


HUMPTY DUMPTY SAT ON A WALL,
HUMPTY DUMPTY HAD A GREAT FALL.
FLIP
FLIP
HEY.
SQUISH
WERE YOU HOLDING ON TO THIS FOR ME? THANK YOU.
OKAY, GOOD JOB.
I'M SO STUPID.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN HOW IT FEELS TO HAVE...
SOMETHING TAKEN AWAY FROM ME.
...MEANT SO MUCH TO HIM!


I GUESS HE CAN HELP HIM OUT AGAIN.
IT'S GOING TO BE AN INTER-ESTING PUPPET SHOW.
THAT WAS A PAWN I DIDN'T INTEND TO PLAY.
SPLASH
All the King's horses and all the Kings men,
Couldn't put Humpty together again.


CHRIS WAS ALWAYS SO HAPPY AND AGREEABLE.
WHEN HIS EXPRESSION AND MOOD CHANGED, HE WAS LIKE ANOTHER PERSON...
...AT THAT MOMENT..
I WAS UNABLE TO MOVE FOR SOME REASON.
NOW I KNOW WHY
IT WASN'T THAT THE WIND ATTACK FRIGHTENED ME.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN--

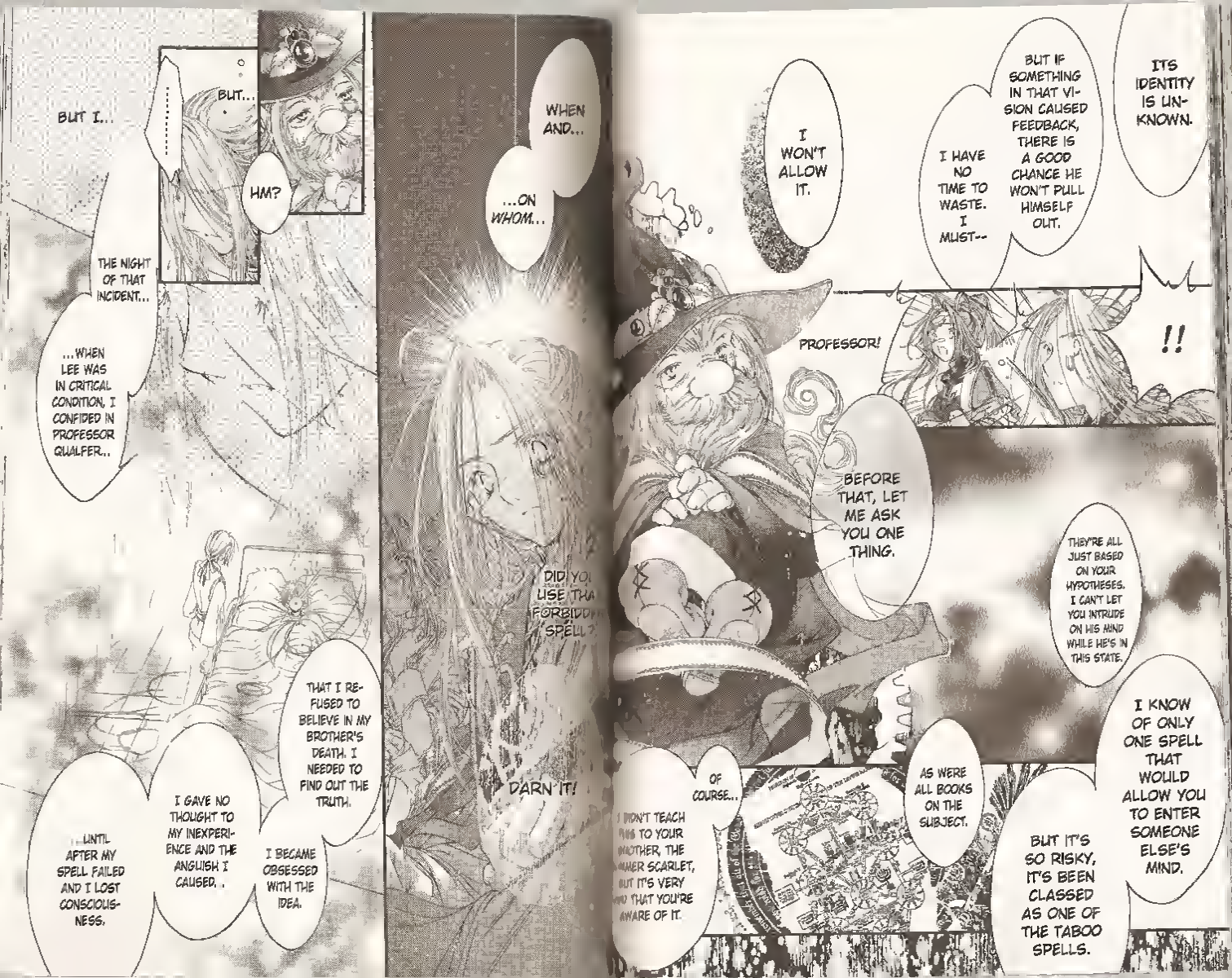
YEOUCH!
...FINDING THE CRYSTAL FAST.
WHAT MATTERS IS...
IF I GET IT TO CHRIS, HE'LL BE BACK ON HIS FEET!
HOW FAR DID DARWELL THROW THIS THING?
I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE
THIS BUSH HAS THORNS.
SHUFFLE SHUFFLE SHUFFLE SHUFFLE

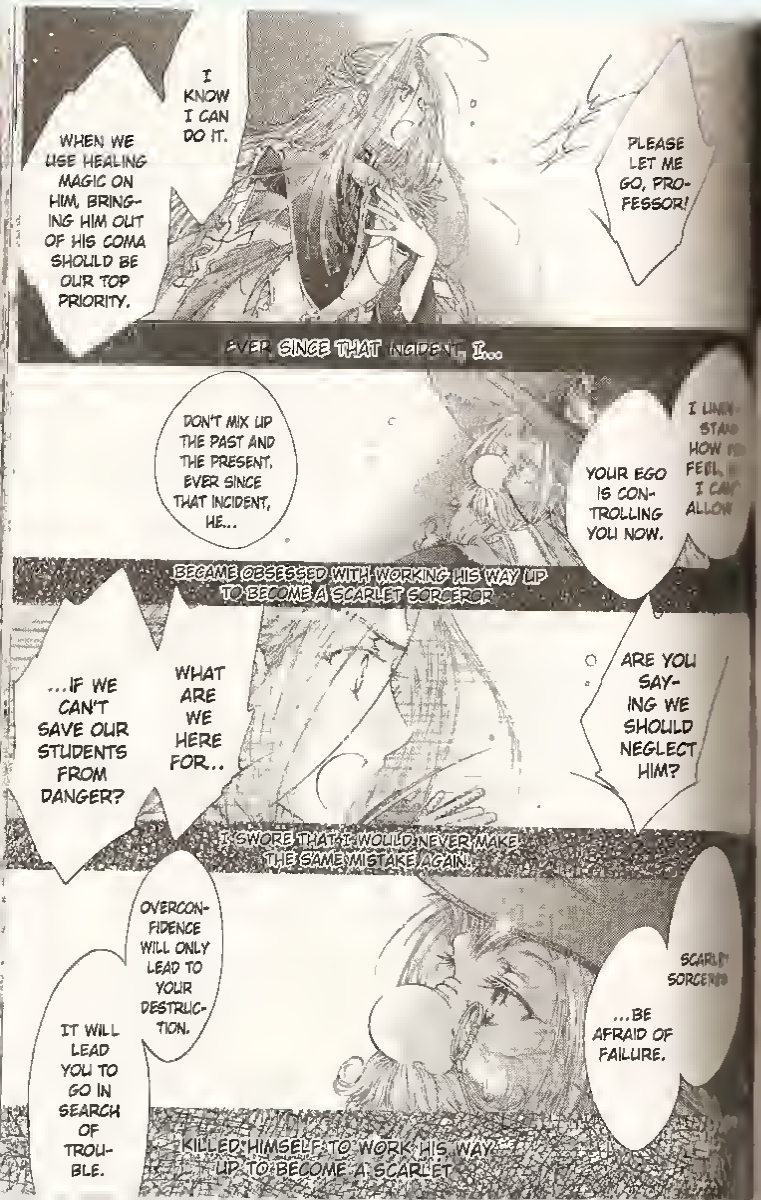

SHE'S NOT IN MY CLASS.
NO ONE IN THE SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS HAD SUCH FLUFFY HAIR. AND I HAVEN'T SEEN HER IN THE WIZARDRY CLASS.
...I don't think.
IS SHE AN UPPER-CLASSMAN?
BUT SHE ISN'T WEARING A UNIFORM.
...WHO IS...
...THIS GIRL?
ARE YOU A STUDENT HERE?
HAVE YOU BEEN HERE FOR A WHILE?
!

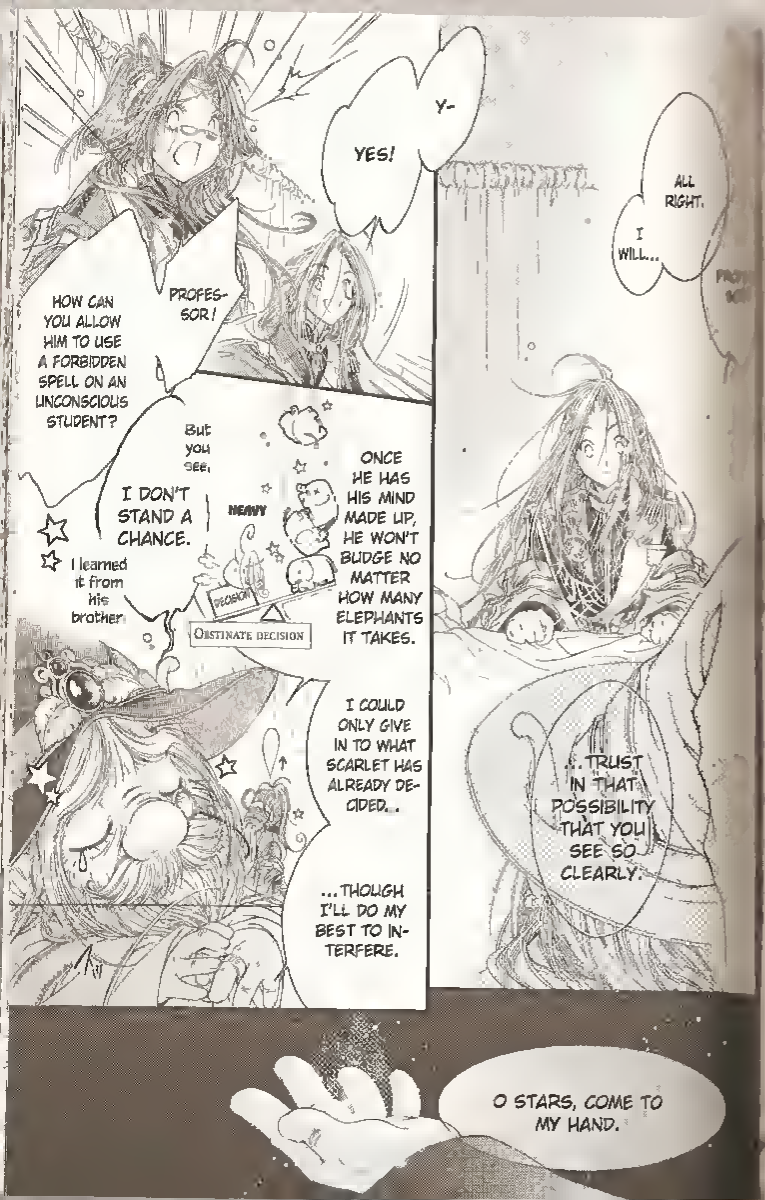
WHY ARE YOU GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY FOR SOMEONE ELSE?
HOW IS THAT GIRL DOING?
YUEHUA IS WITH HER IN HER ROOM NOW.
I SEE. AND WHAT ABOUT QUALFER?
I BELIEVE HE HAS RECEIVED MY MESSAGE.
SINCE HE HASN'T RESPONDED, HE MAY NOT BE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE
PEEP
UHM, UMMM.
BAM!
BAM!
WELL, THEN...
...CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
No way!
REALLY?
M-MOD
ZLIRT
ZLIRT
ZLIRT
LET ME SEE..
IT'S SHAPED LIKE THIS AND THIS IS IN GOLD.
AND I THINK THIS PART IS IN BLUE OR GREEN.
I HAVEN'T HAD A GOOD LOOK AT IT
HAVE YOU SEEN A WOMAN'S NECKLACE-TYPE THING AROUND HERE?
Have you?
I SEE.
OKAY, I UNDERSTAND. SORRY, THANKS.
A LETDOWN
SHAKE SHAKE
HUH?
UMPH
IS IT YOURS?
IS IT MEANINGFUL TO YOU?

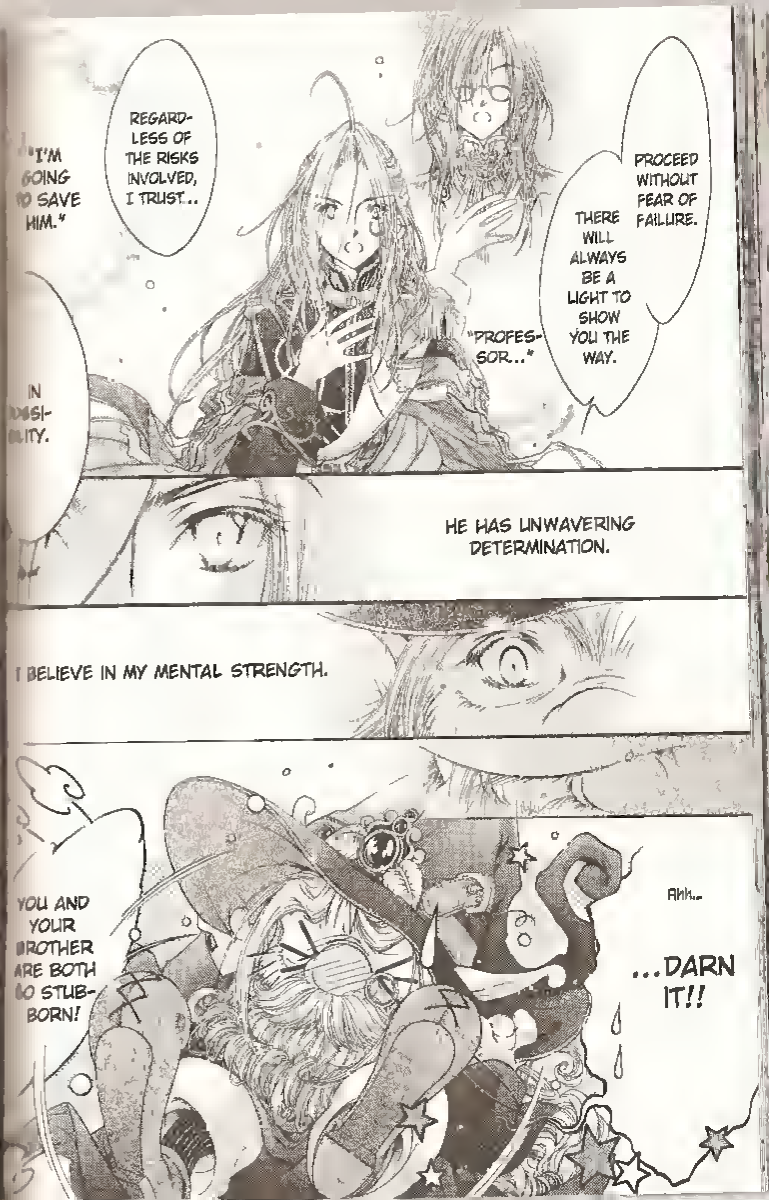
PLEASE GET AHOLD OF YOURSELF, CHESFORD.
THAT'S ABSURD!
I WANT TO SEE QUALFER!
HE SHOULD... HE SHOULD KNOW THE TRUTH!
IT'S A THAT BROTH IS DEAL
HE IS IN NO CONDITION TO SPEAK!
HE HAD TWO ATTACKS OF CARDIAC ARREST AND IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION.
HE SUFFERED A COMPLETE POWER LOSS AND IS UNCONSCIOUS.
PEEP.
PROFESSOR.
I SUPPOSE... WE'RE UP AGAINST A WALL.
HMM.
WE HAVE NO CHOICE.
CHESFORD AND I HAVE ALREADY SET THE BARRIER. NEITHER OF US CAN BREAK AWAY.
I CONSIDERED SUMMONING A MESSENGER FROM THE BELOVED FOREST LAND AS A LAST RESORT BUT...
WITH BLACK KYLIN TIED UP, NO ONE ELSE CAN PASS THROUGH THE FAIRY WORLD GATE TO THE LAND
PEEP.
LIES!

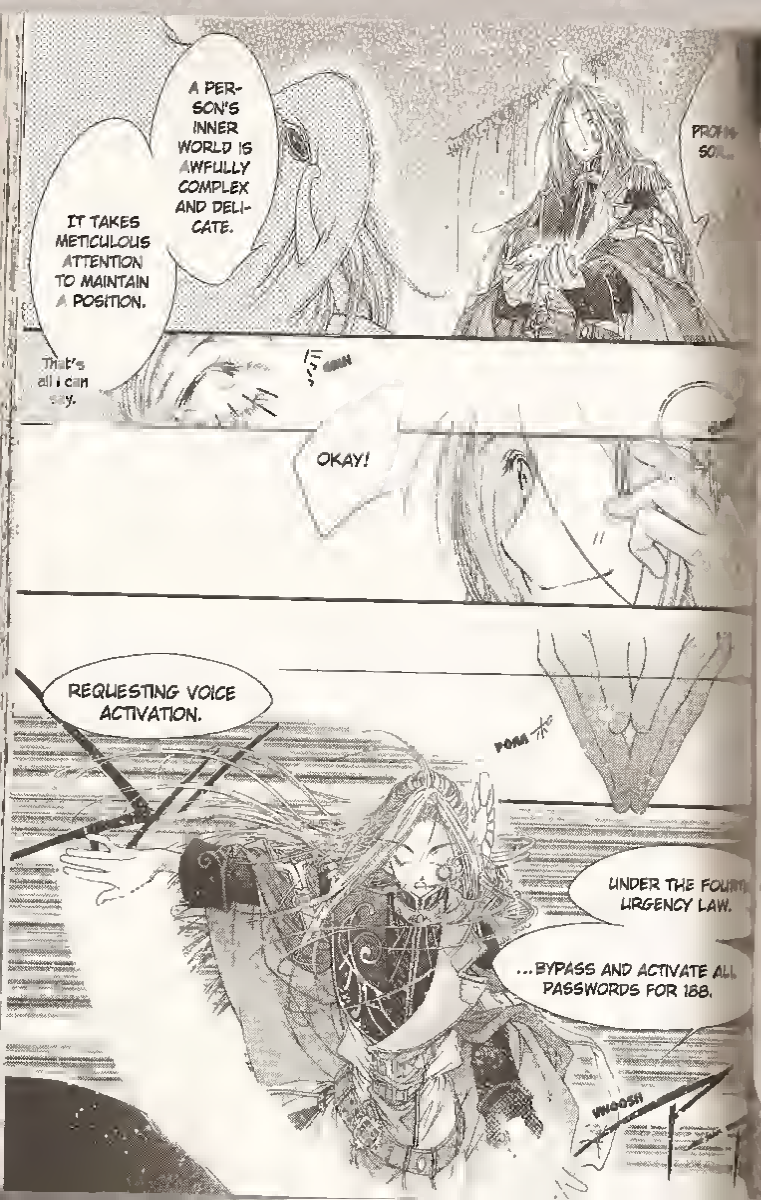
I WOULD LIKE TO...
...TRY TO ENTER HIS MIND.
WHAT?!
THEORETICALLY, HEALING MAGIC, TO BE TRULY EFFECTIVE, REQUIRES DEEP UNION BETWEEN PATIENT AND PRACTICIONER.
IT MIGHT BE THAT THE BOY IS IN A LIFELESS STATE BECAUSE HIS MIND AND BODY HAVE BEEN SEPARATED.
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY HE CAN'T REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS AND IS RESISTANT TO MAGIC.
YOU'RE SAYING YOU DON'T BELIEVE BEING ROBBED OF HIS ELF CRYSTAL IS THE CAUSE OF HIS COLLAPSE?
TELL ME.
WHAT MAKES YOU BELIEVE THIS?
...A STRONG SURGE PUSHED ME OUT AND FORCED ME TO SHUT DOWN MY VISION.
AS I WAS USING A RESIDUAL NOTION SPELL TO LOOK THROUGH HIS JACKET...
THAT SHOCK MY MONOCLE COULD NOT HAVE COME FROM ORDINARY OVER REFLECTION.
AT FIRST I BELIEVED THE SUDDENLY APPEARING SYLPHS HAD CAUSED
BUT COTTONBURG SAW RANDIT AND OTHERS GETTING INJURED.
HE SUDDENLY BECAME DISTRESSED AND EVERYTHING WENT BLANK.
I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING POWERFUL THAT REJECTED ME—AGAINST HIS WILL.

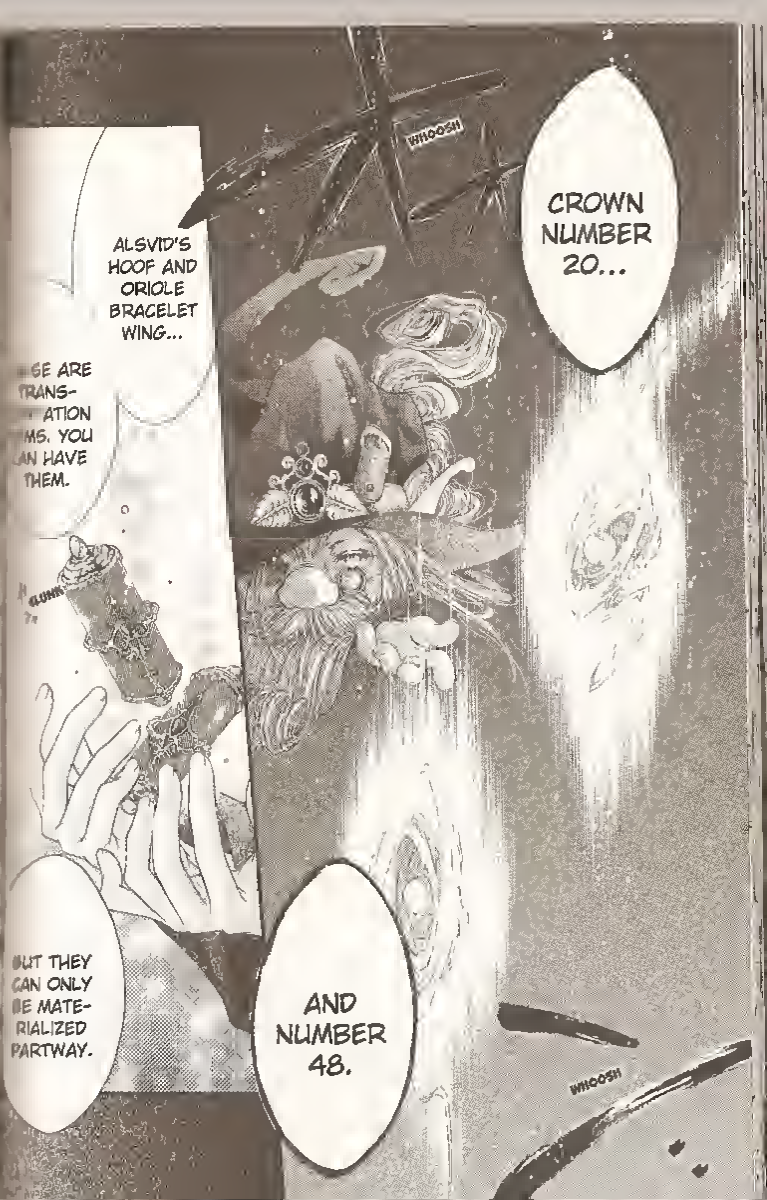

BUT I...
BUT...
HM?
THE NIGHT OF THAT INCIDENT...
...WHEN LEE WAS IN CRITICAL CONDITION, I CONFIDED IN PROFESSOR QUALFER...
...UNTIL AFTER MY SPELL FAILED AND I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS.
I GAVE NO THOUGHT TO MY INEXPERIENCE AND THE ANGUISH I CAUSED. .
THAT I REFUSED TO BELIEVE IN MY BROTHER'S DEATH. I NEEDED TO FIND OUT THE TRUTH.
I BECAME OBSESSED WITH THE IDEA.
WHEN AND...
...ON WHOM...
DID YOU USE THAT FORBIDDEN SPELL?
D'ARN IT!
I WON'T ALLOW IT.
I HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE. I MUST--
BUT IF SOMETHING IN THAT VISION CAUSED FEEDBACK, THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE HE WON'T PULL HIMSELF OUT.
ITS IDENTITY IS UNKNOWN.
PROFESSOR!
!!
BEFORE THAT, LET ME ASK YOU ONE THING.
THEY'RE ALL JUST BASED ON YOUR HYPOTHESES. I CAN'T LET YOU INTRUDE ON HIS MIND WHILE HE'S IN THIS STATE.
I KNOW OF ONLY ONE SPELL THAT WOULD ALLOW YOU TO ENTER SOMEONE ELSE'S MIND.
BUT IT'S SO RISKY, IT'S BEEN CLASSED AS ONE OF THE TABOO SPELLS.
AS WERE ALL BOOKS ON THE SUBJECT.
OF COURSE...
I DON'T TEACH THIS TO YOUR BROTHER, THE SUMMER SCARLET, BUT IT'S VERY LIKELY THAT YOU'RE AWARE OF IT.

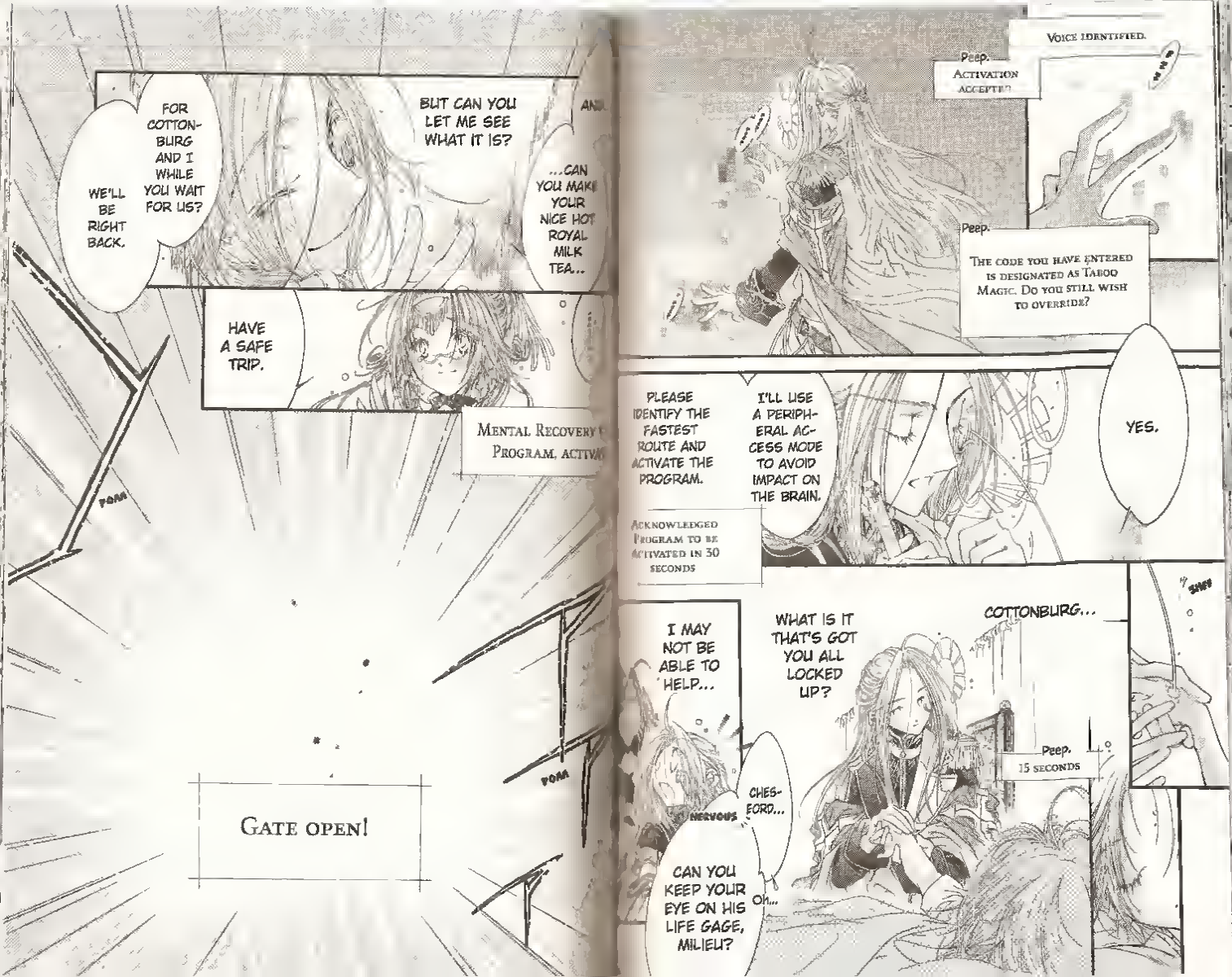

I KNOW I CAN DO IT.
WHEN WE USE HEALING MAGIC ON HIM, BRINGING HIM OUT OF HIS COMA SHOULD BE OUR TOP PRIORITY.
PLEASE LET ME GO, PROFESSOR!
EVER SINCE THAT INCIDENT, I...
DON'T MIX UP THE PAST AND THE PRESENT. EVER SINCE THAT INCIDENT, HE...
YOUR EGO IS CONTROLLING YOU NOW.
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT I CAN'T ALLOW
BECAME OBSESSED WITH WORKING HIS WAY UP TO BECOME A SCARLET SORCEROR
...IF WE CAN'T SAVE OUR STUDENTS FROM DANGER?
WHAT ARE WE HERE FOR..
ARE YOU SAYING WE SHOULD NEGLECT HIM?
I SWORE THAT I WOULD NEVER MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AGAIN.
OVERCONFIDENCE WILL ONLY LEAD TO YOUR DESTRUCTION.
IT WILL LEAD YOU TO GO IN SEARCH OF TROUBLE.
SCARLET SORCEROR
...BE AFRAID OF FAILURE.
KILLED HIMSELF TO WORK HIS WAY UP TO BECOME A SCARLET
AND HE HAD ALREADY TAKEN IN THE DARKNESS.
WHEN I CAME AROUND, THE BED WAS COMPLETELY EMPTY...
IF I HAD BEEN MORE POWERFUL AND HADN'T FAILED THE SPELL...
I COULD HAVE PREVENTED AT LEAST THAT TRAGEDY.
IF I HAD TRULY UNDERSTOOD THE DARKNESS IN HIS HEART...
I'M SORRY, ARSHES.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I'LL NEVER GO THROUGH THAT AGAIN.
...WHEN I COULD HAVE TRIED TO SAVE HIM.
I REFUSE TO WATCH SOMEONE DIE..

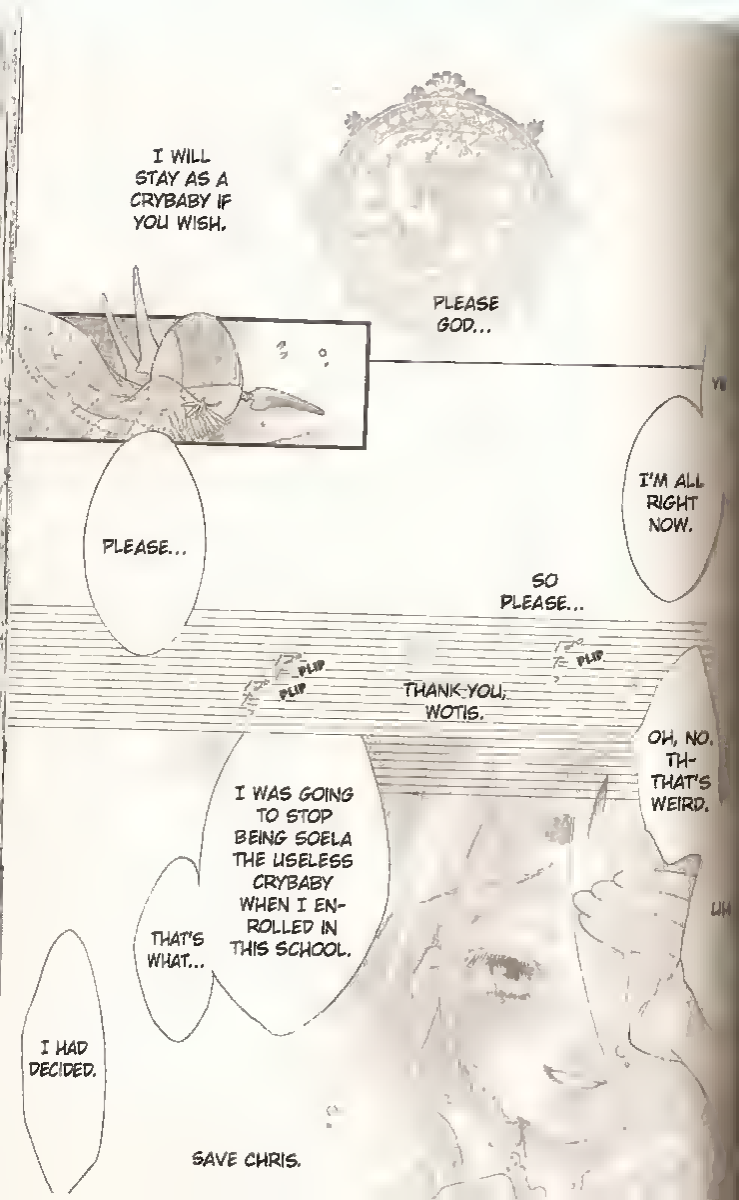

Y-
YES!
ALL RIGHT.
I WILL...
PROFESSOR!
HOW CAN YOU ALLOW HIM TO USE A FORBIDDEN SPELL ON AN UNCONSCIOUS STUDENT?
But you see,
I DON'T STAND A CHANCE.
I learned it from his brother.
HEAVY
DECISION
OBSTINATE DECISION
ONCE HE HAS HIS MIND MADE UP, HE WON'T BUDGE NO MATTER HOW MANY ELEPHANTS IT TAKES.
I COULD ONLY GIVE IN TO WHAT SCARLET HAS ALREADY DECIDED..
...THOUGH I'LL DO MY BEST TO INTERFERE.
O STARS, COME TO MY HAND.
...TRUST IN THAT POSSIBILITY THAT YOU SEE SO CLEARLY.

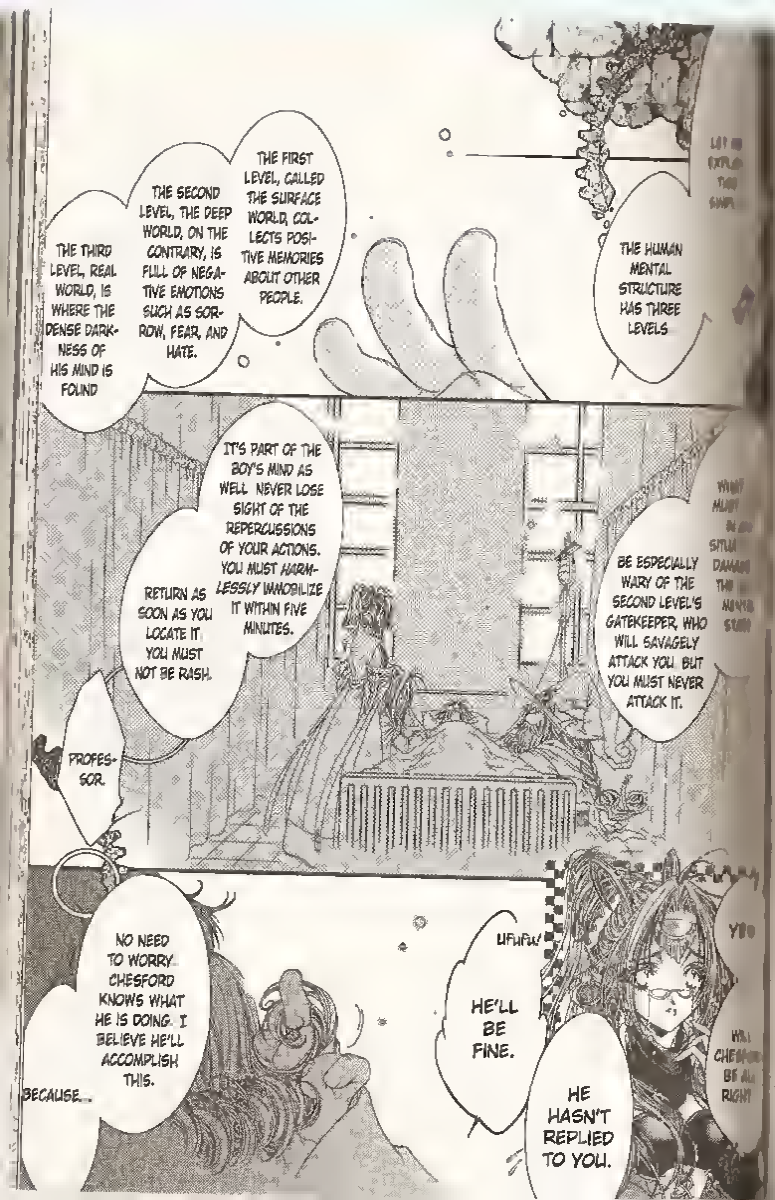

"I'M GOING TO SAVE HIM."
REGARDLESS OF THE RISKS INVOLVED, I TRUST..
IN POSSIBILITY.
"PROFESSOR..."
THERE WILL ALWAYS BE A LIGHT TO SHOW YOU THE WAY.
PROCEED WITHOUT FEAR OF FAILURE.
HE HAS UNWAVERING DETERMINATION.
I BELIEVE IN MY MENTAL STRENGTH.
YOU AND YOUR BROTHER ARE BOTH SO STUBBORN!
Ahh...
...DARN IT!!


A PERSON'S INNER WORLD IS AWFULLY COMPLEX AND DELICATE.
IT TAKES METICULOUS ATTENTION TO MAINTAIN A POSITION.
That's all I can say.
OKAY!
REQUESTING VOICE ACTIVATION.
UNDER THE FOURTH URGENCY LAW.
...BYPASS AND ACTIVATE ALL PASSWORDS FOR 188.
WHOOSH

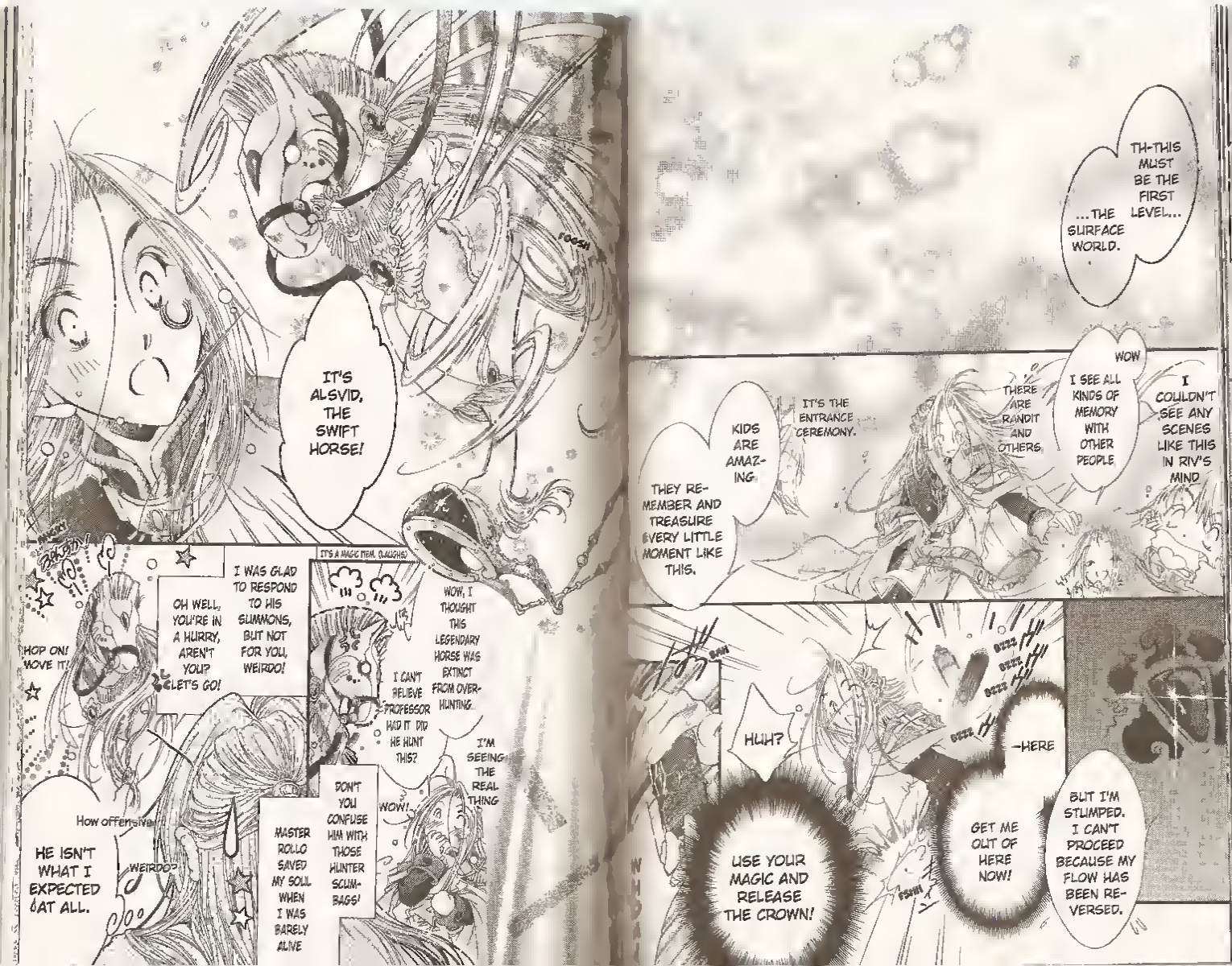

WHOOSH
CROWN NUMBER 20...
ALSVID'S HOOF AND ORIOLE BRACELET WING...
AND NUMBER 48.
WHOOSH


WE'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
FOR COTTONBURG AND I WHILE YOU WAIT FOR US?
BUT CAN YOU LET ME SEE WHAT IT IS?
AND...
...CAN YOU MAKE YOUR NICE HOT ROYAL MILK TEA...
HAVE A SAFE TRIP.
MENTAL RECOVERY PROGRAM, ACTIVA
POM
POM
GATE OPEN!
VOICE IDENTIFIED.
Peep.
ACTIVATION ACCEPTED
Peep.
THE CODE YOU HAVE ENTERED IS DESIGNATED AS TABOO MAGIC. DO YOU STILL WISH TO OVERRIDE?
YES.
I'LL USE A PERIPHERAL ACCESS MODE TO AVOID IMPACT ON THE BRAIN.
PLEASE IDENTIFY THE FASTEST ROUTE AND ACTIVATE THE PROGRAM.
ACKNOWLEDGED PROGRAM TO BE ACTIVATED IN 30 SECONDS
COTTONBURG...
WHAT IS IT THAT'S GOT YOU ALL LOCKED UP?
I MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HELP...
NERVOUS
CHESFORD...
OH...
CAN YOU KEEP YOUR EYE ON HIS LIFE GAGE, MILIEU?
Peep.
15 SECONDS
SIGH


I WILL STAY AS A CRYBABY IF YOU WISH.
PLEASE GOD...
PLEASE...
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW.
SO PLEASE...
PLIP
PLIP
PLIP
THANK-YOU, WOTIS.
OH, NO. TH-THAT'S WEIRD.
I WAS GOING TO STOP BEING SOELA THE USELESS CRYBABY WHEN I EN-ROLLED IN THIS SCHOOL.
THAT'S WHAT...
I HAD DECIDED.
SAVE CHRIS.


THE HUMAN MENTAL STRUCTURE HAS THREE LEVELS
THE FIRST LEVEL, CALLED THE SURFACE WORLD, COLLECTS POSITIVE MEMORIES ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE.
THE SECOND LEVEL, THE DEEP WORLD, ON THE CONTRARY, IS FULL OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS SUCH AS SORROW, FEAR, AND HATE.
THE THIRD LEVEL, REAL WORLD, IS WHERE THE DENSE DARKNESS OF HIS MIND IS FOUND
BE ESPECIALLY WARY OF THE SECOND LEVEL'S GATEKEEPER, WHO WILL SAVAGELY ATTACK YOU. BUT YOU MUST NEVER ATTACK IT.
IT'S PART OF THE BOY'S MIND AS WELL. NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THE REPERCUSSIONS OF YOUR ACTIONS. YOU MUST HARMLESSLY IMMOBILIZE IT WITHIN FIVE MINUTES.
RETURN AS SOON AS YOU LOCATE IT. YOU MUST NOT BE RASH.
PROFESSOR.
NO NEED TO WORRY. CHESFORD KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING. I BELIEVE HE'LL ACCOMPLISH THIS.
BECAUSE...
UFUFU!
HE'LL BE FINE.
HE HASN'T REPLIED TO YOU.

...HE IS THE HEIR I'M PROUD OF. ♡


IT'S ALSVID, THE SWIFT HORSE!
FOOSH
I WAS GLAD TO RESPOND TO HIS SUMMONS, BUT NOT FOR YOU, WEIRDO!
OH WELL, YOU'RE IN A HURRY, AREN'T YOU? LET'S GO!
HOP ON! MOVE IT!
IT'S A MAGIC ITEM. (LAUGHS)
I CAN'T BELIEVE PROFESSOR HAD IT. DID HE HUNT THIS?
WOW, I THOUGHT THIS LEGENDARY HORSE WAS EXTINCT FROM OVER-HUNTING.
I'M SEEING THE REAL THING
WOW!
DON'T YOU CONFUSE HIM WITH THOSE HUNTER SCUM-BAGS!
MASTER ROLLO SAVED MY SOUL WHEN I WAS BARELY ALIVE
How offensive!
WEIRDO?
HE ISN'T WHAT I EXPECTED AT ALL.
TH-THIS MUST BE THE FIRST LEVEL... ...THE SURFACE WORLD.
WOW I SEE ALL KINDS OF MEMORY WITH OTHER PEOPLE
I COULDN'T SEE ANY SCENES LIKE THIS IN RIV'S MIND
THERE ARE BANDIT AND OTHERS.
IT'S THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY.
KIDS ARE AMAZ-ING.
THEY RE-MEMBER AND TREASURE EVERY LITTLE MOMENT LIKE THIS.
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
HUH?
-HERE
BUT I'M STUMPED. I CAN'T PROCEED BECAUSE MY FLOW HAS BEEN RE-VERSED.
GET ME OUT OF HERE NOW!
USE YOUR MAGIC AND RELEASE THE CROWN!
FSHH!

WHAT STRONG SPIRITUAL ENERGY...
ZOOSH
!!
HuhP
I GUESS HE GOT DEMATERIALIZED BY ITS PRESSURE.
WHOOSH
SCUSE THE PUN AS I CAN HELP YOU.
"THE SECOND LEVEL, THE DEEP WORLD, IS FILLED WITH NEGATIVE EMOTIONS."
"THERE IS A FEROCIOUS GATEKEEPER IN ITS MASTER'S ELEMENTAL BEAST FORM THAT PREVENTS INVADERS."
YES.
OCCASIONALLY, BEFORE MASTER ROLLO SEALED IT AWAY AS FORBIDDEN MAGIC..
.WHICH HAS BEEN PUZZLING ME
WHOOSH
WHAT KIND OF CHILD IS THIS?
WHIRR
HUH?
THESE ARE MOST LIKELY RECENT MEMORIES THERE IS NO MEMORY BEFORE IT.
KIDS' MEMORIES ARE USUALLY SHINY AND DEEP, BUT HIS IS ONLY ON THE SURFACE WITH THE REST BLANK.
RUSTLE
FWOOSH
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO SOMEONE'S INNER WORLD?
.....
ZAPS
HEY! I CAN SEE THE SECOND LEVEL NOW. PREPARE YOURSELF. WHEN YOU PLUNGE IN, YOU'LL—

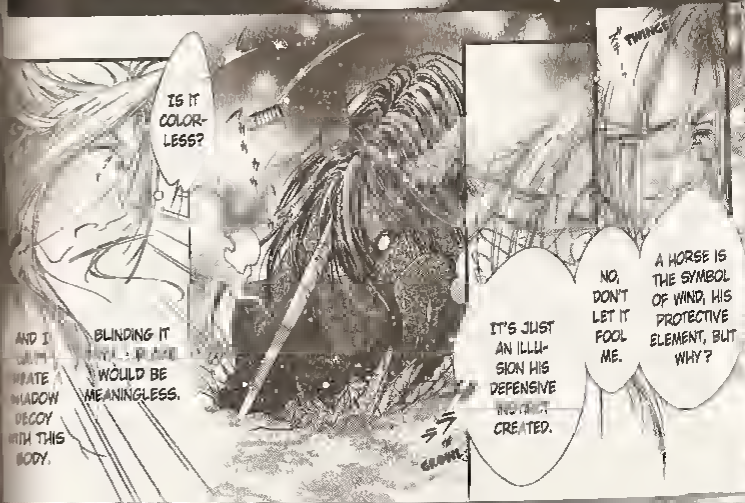
WHERE IS HE? WHERE ARE YOU, COTTONBURG?
I CAN'T FIND HIM. I'LL SCATTER THE WILL-O'-THE-WISP!
IT'S TOO DARK TO SEE ANYTHING--
DOSH
WHAT?
IT'S NIGHT-MARE!!

YAHH!
SWISH
THUMP
SWISH
CRASH!
-IIIGCA
PANT!
RELAX, HE'S FINE.
P-PROFESSOR!
CHRIS!
CHESFORD MUST HAVE ENTERED THE SECOND LEVEL AND ENCOUNTERED A GATE-KEEPER.
HE'LL BATTLE HOWN SOON FOCUS ON HIS LIFE FORCE
HANG ON, CHRIS!
SHAKE
CHESFORD...
YOU MUST HURRY
THIS IS YOUR FIRST REAL FIGHT DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME
GRRRR

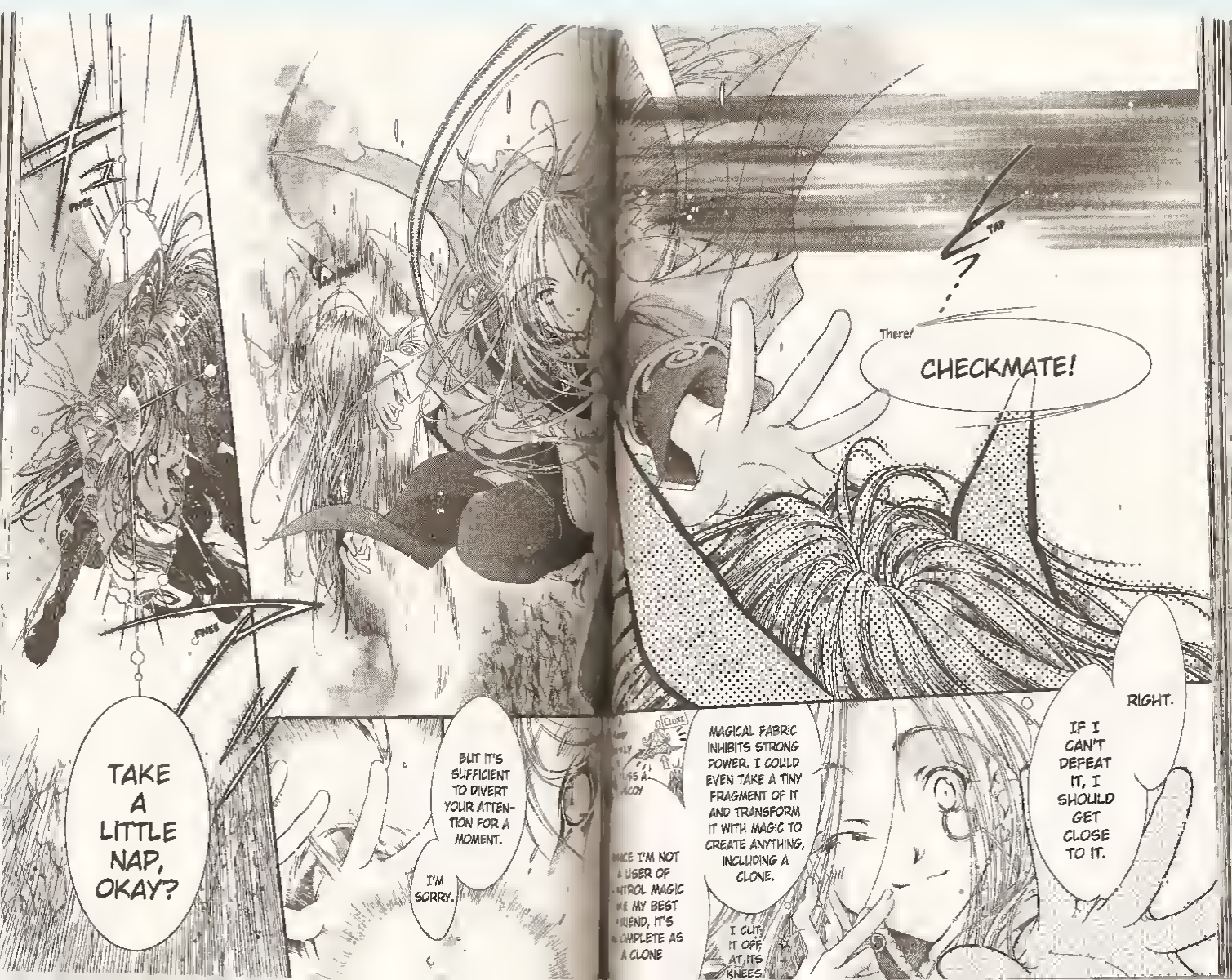
AGH!
!!
WHAT CAN I DO?
IT'S FAST!
THUMP

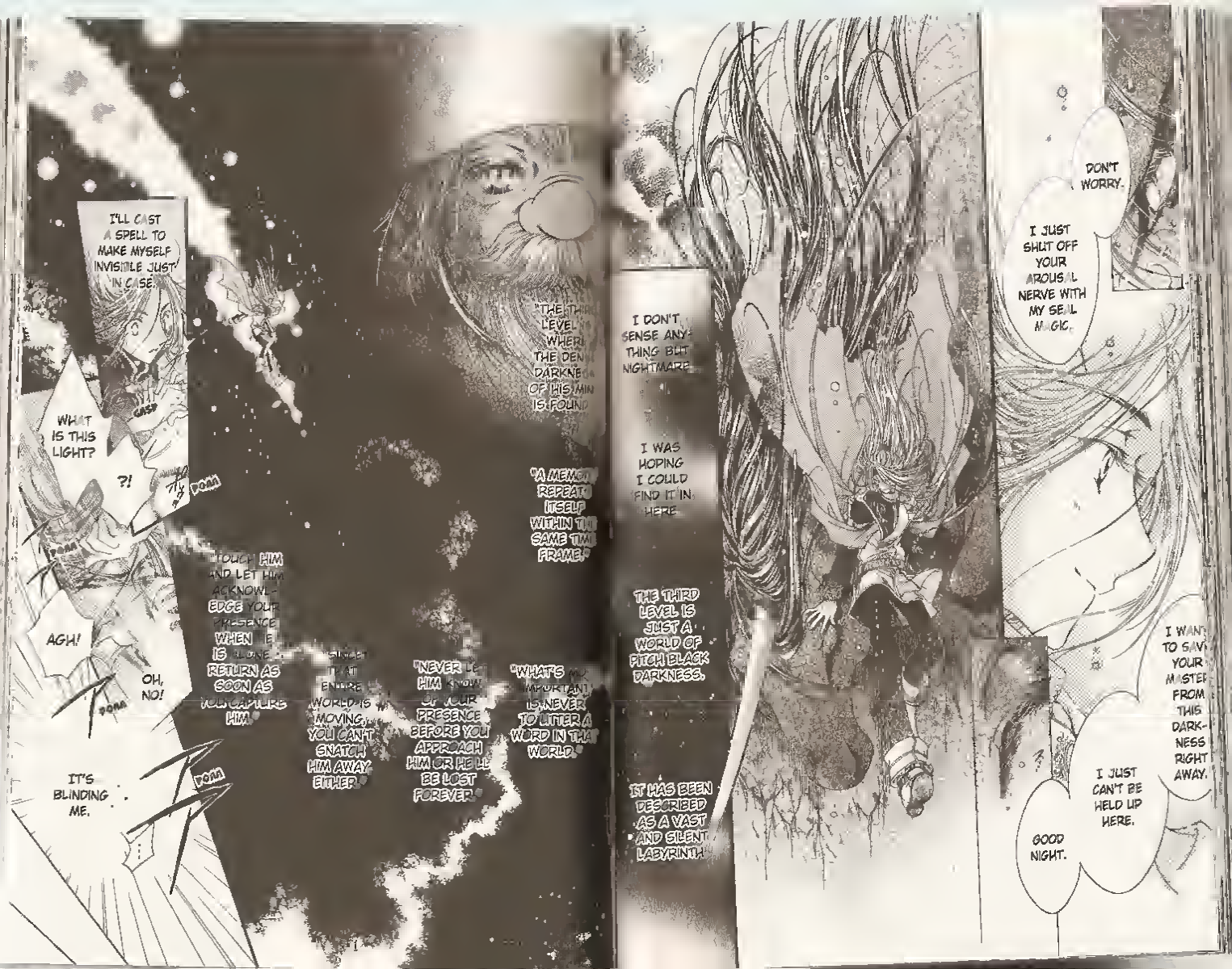
IT'S WAY TOO FAST!
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO BRING THIS DOWN HARMLESSLY IN FIVE MINUTES.
Jeez!
I GOT REPEATED WARNINGS ABOUT DAMAGING HIS INNER WORLD..
...SO I'M USING A SHOCK ABSORPTION SPELL TO LAND CAREFULLY.
I'm going nuts.
SLAMM

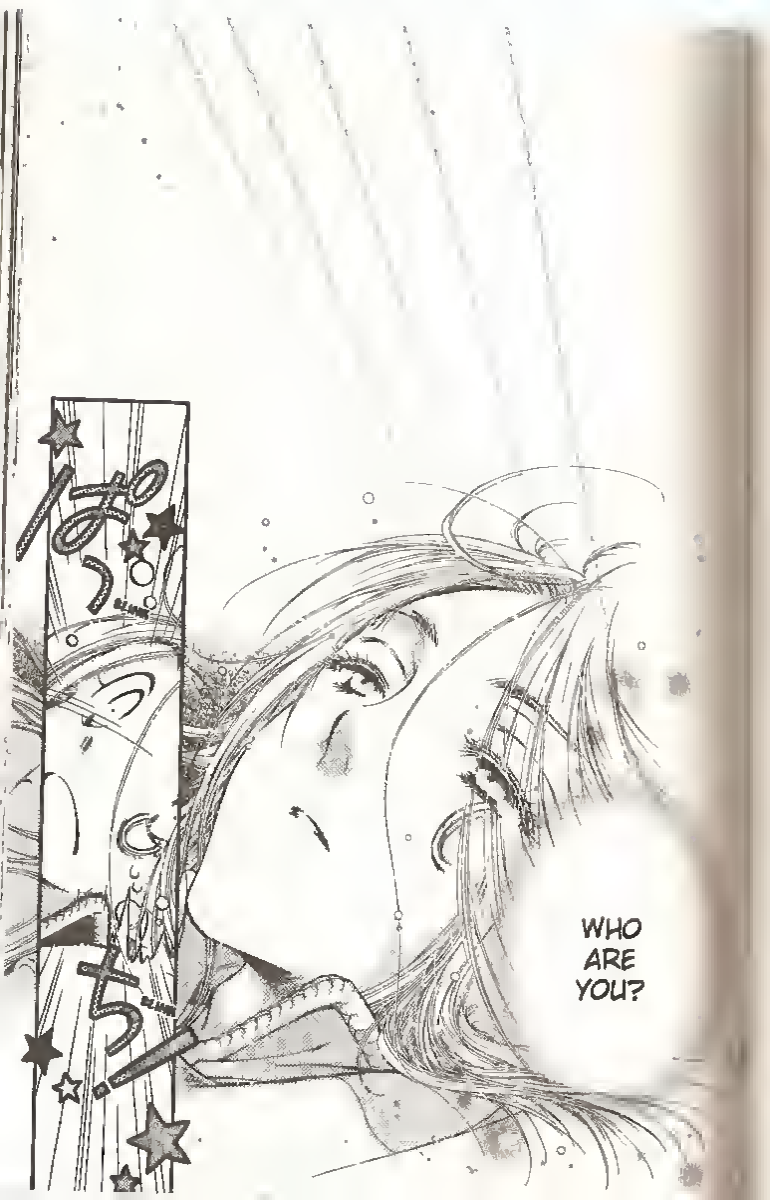
WHAT A BEAST LIVES IN THIS YOUNG MIND!
SINCE IT MOVES ACROSS DREAMS, IT SHOULDN'T REMAIN IN ONE PLACE.
THE NIGHTMARE IS A BLACK BEAST OF A HORSE, A SYMBOL OF THE NIGHTMARES THAT GENERATE DESPAIR.


IS IT COLORLESS?
AND I CREATE A SHADOW DECOY WITH THIS BODY.
BLINDING IT WOULD BE MEANINGLESS.
TWINGE
IT'S JUST AN ILLUSION HIS DEFENSIVE INSTINCT CREATED.
NO, DON'T LET IT FOOL ME.
A HORSE IS THE SYMBOL OF WIND, HIS PROTECTIVE ELEMENT, BUT WHY?
GRAWL

...IV... AND ...OICAL ...RIC?
...THIS IS FASHIONED TO BE MORE THAN JUST DEFENSIVE.
UNLIKE THE OFFENSIVE-STYLE OUTFITS RIV WEARS...
Jeez!
I CAN'T MOVE WITH MY ROBE IN THE WAY!
OH...
SWIP
YES, THAT'S IT!
IF IT'S BLIND, IT'S WORTH A GAMBLE!
COME AND GET ME!
DASH

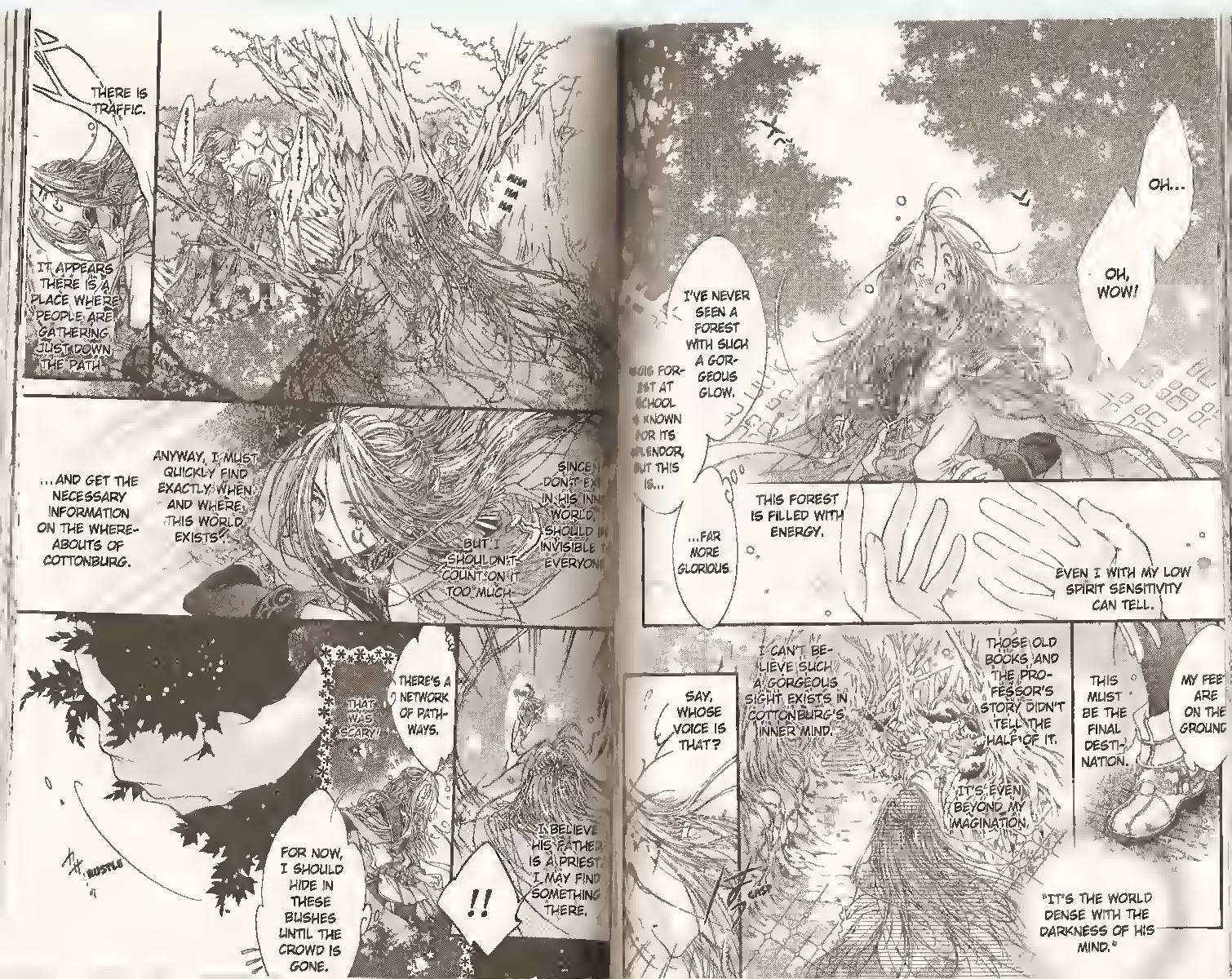

TAKE A LITTLE NAP, OKAY?
BUT IT'S SUFFICIENT TO DIVERT YOUR ATTENTION FOR A MOMENT.
I'M SORRY.
SINCE I'M NOT A USER OF CONTROL MAGIC LIKE MY BEST FRIEND, IT'S NOT AS COMPLETE AS A CLONE
MAGICAL FABRIC INHIBITS STRONG POWER. I COULD EVEN TAKE A TINY FRAGMENT OF IT AND TRANSFORM IT WITH MAGIC TO CREATE ANYTHING, INCLUDING A CLONE.
I CUT IT OFF AT ITS KNEES.
There!
CHECKMATE!
RIGHT.
IF I CAN'T DEFEAT IT, I SHOULD GET CLOSE TO IT.


I'LL CAST A SPELL TO MAKE MYSELF INVISIBLE JUST IN CASE.
WHAT IS THIS LIGHT?
GASP
?!
POOM
POOM
POOM
AGH!
OH, NO!
IT'S BLINDING ME.
POOM
"THE THIRD LEVEL, WHERE THE DEEPEST DARKNESS OF THIS MINE IS FOUND."
"A MEMORY REPEATS ITSELF WITHIN THE SAME TIME FRAME."
"TOUCH HIM AND LET HIM ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR PRESENCE WHEN HE IS ALONE. RETURN AS SOON AS YOU CAPTURE HIM."
"NEVER LET HIM KNOW OF YOUR PRESENCE BEFORE YOU APPROACH HIM OR HE'LL BE LOST FOREVER."
"WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT IS NEVER TO UTTER A WORD IN THAT WORLD."
I DON'T SENSE ANYTHING BUT NIGHTMARE.
I WAS HOPING I COULD FIND IT IN HERE.
THE THIRD LEVEL IS JUST A WORLD OF PITCH BLACK DARKNESS.
IT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A VAST AND SILENT LABYRINTH.
DON'T WORRY.
I JUST SHUT OFF YOUR AROUSAL NERVE WITH MY SEAL MAGIC.
I WANT TO SAVE YOUR MASTER FROM THIS DARKNESS RIGHT AWAY.
I JUST CAN'T BE HELD UP HERE.
GOOD NIGHT.



ARE YOU THE ONE WHO IS GOING TO RESCUE ME?

TWEET TWEET
TWEET TWEET TWEET
TWEET. TWEET...
HUH?
!!

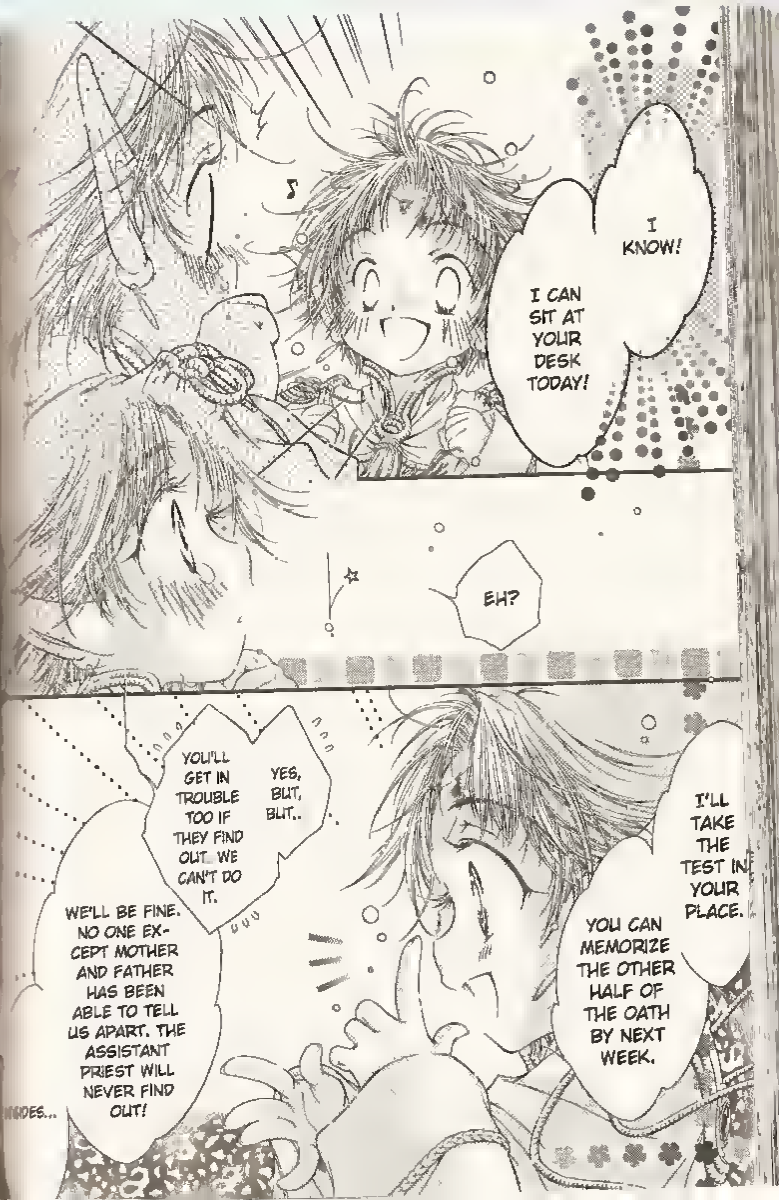

THERE IS TRAFFIC.
IT APPEARS THERE IS A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE ARE GATHERING JUST DOWN THE PATH.
...AND GET THE NECESSARY INFORMATION ON THE WHEREABOUTS OF COTTONBURG.
ANYWAY, I MUST QUICKLY FIND EXACTLY WHEN AND WHERE THIS WORLD EXISTS.
BUT I SHOULDN'T COUNT ON IT TOO MUCH.
SINCE I DON'T EXIST IN HIS INNER WORLD, I SHOULD BE INVISIBLE TO EVERYONE.
THAT WAS SCARY!
THERE'S A NETWORK OF PATHWAYS.
FOR NOW, I SHOULD HIDE IN THESE BUSHES UNTIL THE CROWD IS GONE.
RUSTLE
!!
I BELIEVE HIS FATHER IS A PRIEST. I MAY FIND SOMETHING THERE.
OH...
OH, WOW!
I'VE NEVER SEEN A FOREST WITH SUCH A GORGEOUS GLOW.
BIG FOREST AT SCHOOL KNOWN FOR ITS SPLENDOR, BUT THIS IS...
...FAR MORE GLORIOUS.
THIS FOREST IS FILLED WITH ENERGY.
EVEN I WITH MY LOW SPIRIT SENSITIVITY CAN TELL.
SAY, WHOSE VOICE IS THAT?
I CAN'T BELIEVE SUCH A GORGEOUS SIGHT EXISTS IN COTTONBURG'S INNER MIND.
THOSE OLD BOOKS AND THE PROFESSOR'S STORY DIDN'T TELL THE HALF OF IT.
IT'S EVEN BEYOND MY IMAGINATION.
GASP
THIS MUST BE THE FINAL DESTINATION.
MY FEET ARE ON THE GROUND
"IT'S THE WORLD DENSE WITH THE DARKNESS OF HIS MIND."

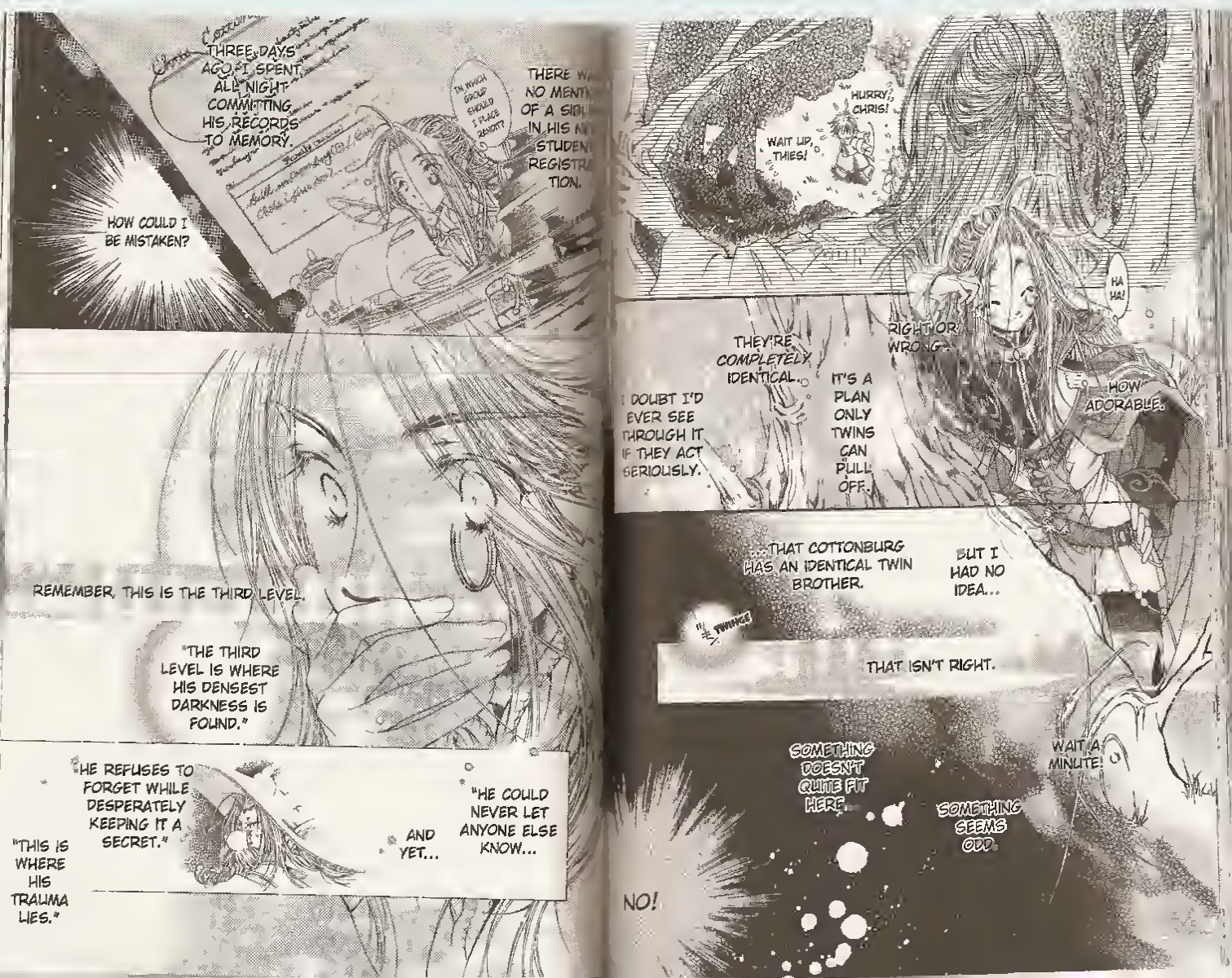
WHAT?
CHRIS!
HAH?
I LOOKED EVERY-WHERE.
HUH?
GREAT, THIS IS WHERE YOU'VE BEEN!
WHAT WERE YOU DOING?
DID YOU FIND SOME-THING?
NO, I FELT THE BREEZE IN THIS DIREC-TION.
THAT'S GREAT, THIES! CAN YOU HEAR SYLPH NOW?
WHAT?
WHAAAT?!
Hold on/
DON'T MAKE A SOUND WEEK

GLANCE
HE LOOKS A BIT YOUNGER.
THIS IS COTTON-BURG, RIGHT?
GOOD, I WAS ABLE TO FIND HIM QUICKLY!
GLANCE
...S/
A CHANCE TO HAVE HIM ACKNOWLEDGE ME AND TAKE HIM.—
WHERE ARE YOU, THIES?
Hang on/
DON'T MAKE A SOUND WEEK
WAHHHH!!
? ?
C-
COTTON-BURG?

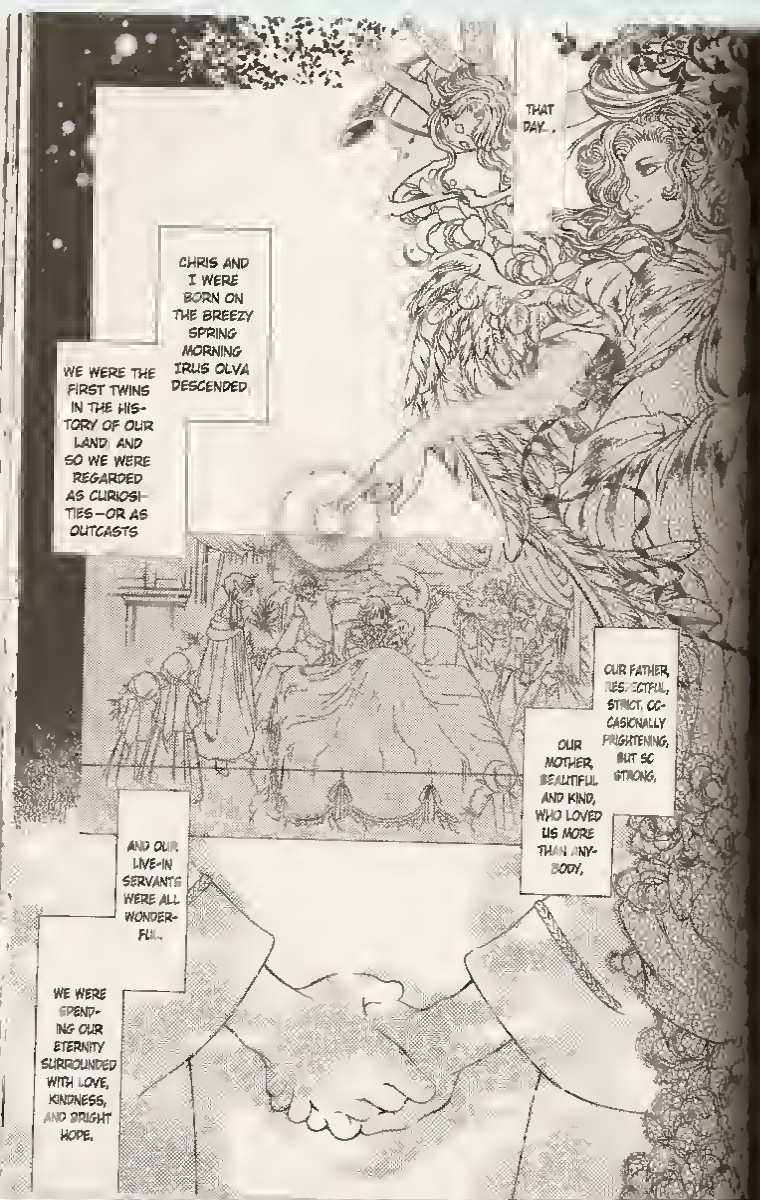
I'M...
I'M NOT AS SMART AS YOU.
I'M SURE THE ASSISTANT PRIEST WILL SLAP MY HAND WITH HIS POINTER...
...AND FATHER WILL CHEW ME OUT!
WAAH!
D-
DON'T CRY, THIES!
R-REMEMBER WHAT MOTHER SAID? NOT EVERYONE IS GOOD AT EVERYTHING.
I KNOW YOU TRIED SO HARD TO MEMORIZE THE REST OF THE OATH! DON'T WORRY. YOU CAN DO IT NOW!
OKAY?
SOB
FLUSTER
PEAKY!
SHAKE!
OH...
STARTLED
WOW!
DEPRESSED
IT'S LIKE LOOKING IN THE MIRROR.
NO, I LOOKED AROUND... BUT I COULDN'T FIND IT.
I SEE, BUT IT HAD TO BE SYLPH! WE JUST CAN'T SEE IT YET.
COME ON, LET'S GO.
I'M NOT GOING. I'M PLAYING HERE!
HUH?
TWACK
COME ON, THIES!
NO!
UH-OH.
YOU CAN SAY THAT BECAUSE YOU PASSED IT ON YOUR FIRST SHOT.
AWW!
JUST LET ME GO!
HEY! WATCH OUT!
I HATE THAT ASSISTANT PRIEST! I ONLY REMEMBER HALF THE PREFACE TO THE OATH. I'LL GET YELLED AT AGAIN!
I SAID I'M NOT GOING! I DON'T WANT TO GO...
WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WE CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.
THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR.
RIGHT, CHRIS?
WE'RE THE ONLY TWINS OF THIS LAND BORN WITH THE BLESSING OF ZEPHYRUS...
. ON THE BREEZY SPRING MORNING IRUS OLVA THE SEASON FAIRY DESCENDED.
He could still be nicer, though
BUT ONE DAY WE'LL BECOME ASSOCIATE PRIESTS TO HELP FATHER. IT'S GOOD TO HAVE A TOUGH ROLE MODEL LIKE HIM.
I THINK FATHER IS PRETTY SCARY, TOO!
I-IN FACT...
SHUFF SHUFF
BUT, BUT... ...I'M AFRAID OF FATHER.
OKAY, THIES.
PFFT PFFT
DON'T TELL ANYONE.
PFFT!


I KNOW!
I CAN SIT AT YOUR DESK TODAY!
EH?
YOU'LL GET IN TROUBLE TOO IF THEY FIND OUT. WE CAN'T DO IT.
YES, BUT, BUT..
WE'LL BE FINE. NO ONE EXCEPT MOTHER AND FATHER HAS BEEN ABLE TO TELL US APART. THE ASSISTANT PRIEST WILL NEVER FIND OUT!
I'LL TAKE THE TEST IN YOUR PLACE.
YOU CAN MEMORIZE THE OTHER HALF OF THE OATH BY NEXT WEEK.

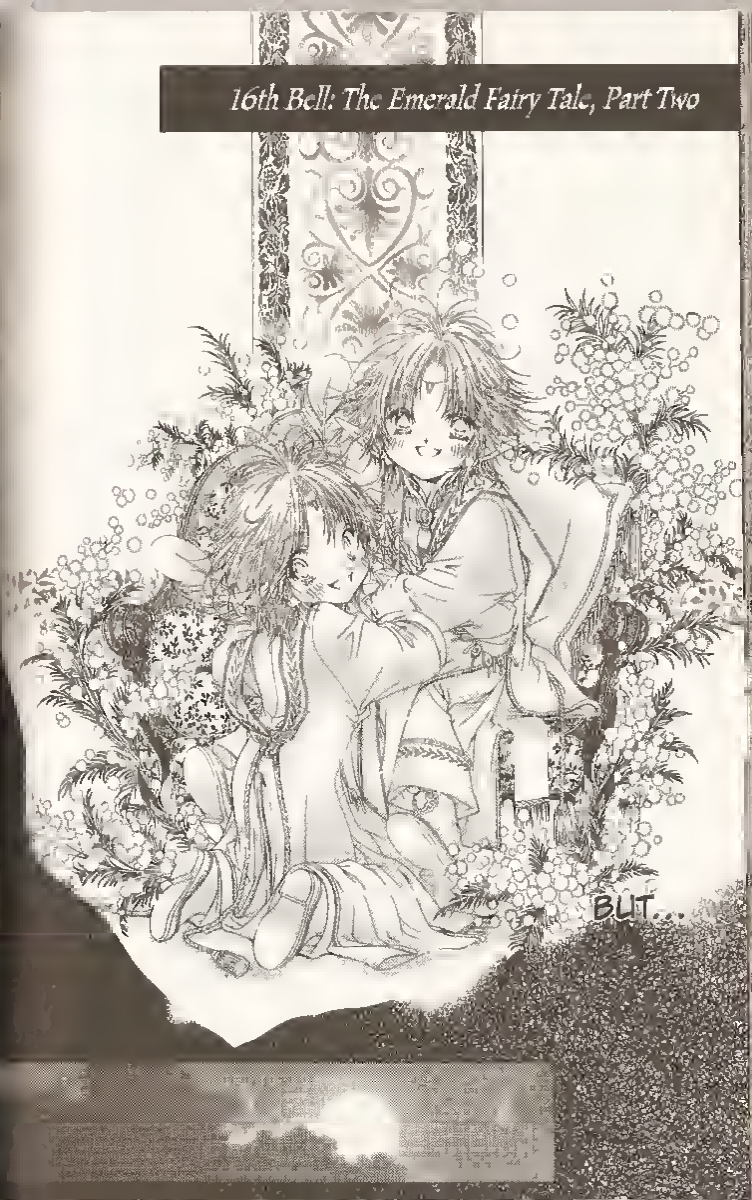

THREE DAYS AGO, I SPENT ALL NIGHT COMMITTING HIS RECORDS TO MEMORY.
IN WHICH GROUP SHOULD I PLACE ZENJOTI?
THERE WA NO MENTI OF A SIBL IN HIS N STUDEN REGISTRA TION.
HOW COULD I BE MISTAKEN?
REMEMBER, THIS IS THE THIRD LEVEL.
"THE THIRD LEVEL IS WHERE HIS DENSEST DARKNESS IS FOUND."
"HE REFUSES TO FORGET WHILE DESPERATELY KEEPING IT A SECRET."
"THIS IS WHERE HIS TRAUMA LIES."
AND YET...
"HE COULD NEVER LET ANYONE ELSE KNOW...
HURRY, CHRIS!
WAIT UP, THIES!
HA HA!
RIGHT OR WRONG.
THEY'RE COMPLETELY IDENTICAL.
IT'S A PLAN ONLY TWINS CAN PULL OFF.
I DOUBT I'D EVER SEE THROUGH IT IF THEY ACT SERIOUSLY.
HOW ADORABLE.
...THAT COTTONBURG HAS AN IDENTICAL TWIN BROTHER.
BUT I HAD NO IDEA...
TWINGE
THAT ISN'T RIGHT.
SOMETHING DOESN'T QUITE FIT HERE.
SOMETHING SEEMS ODD.
WAIT A MINUTE!
NO!

DON'T...
DON'T TELL ME...

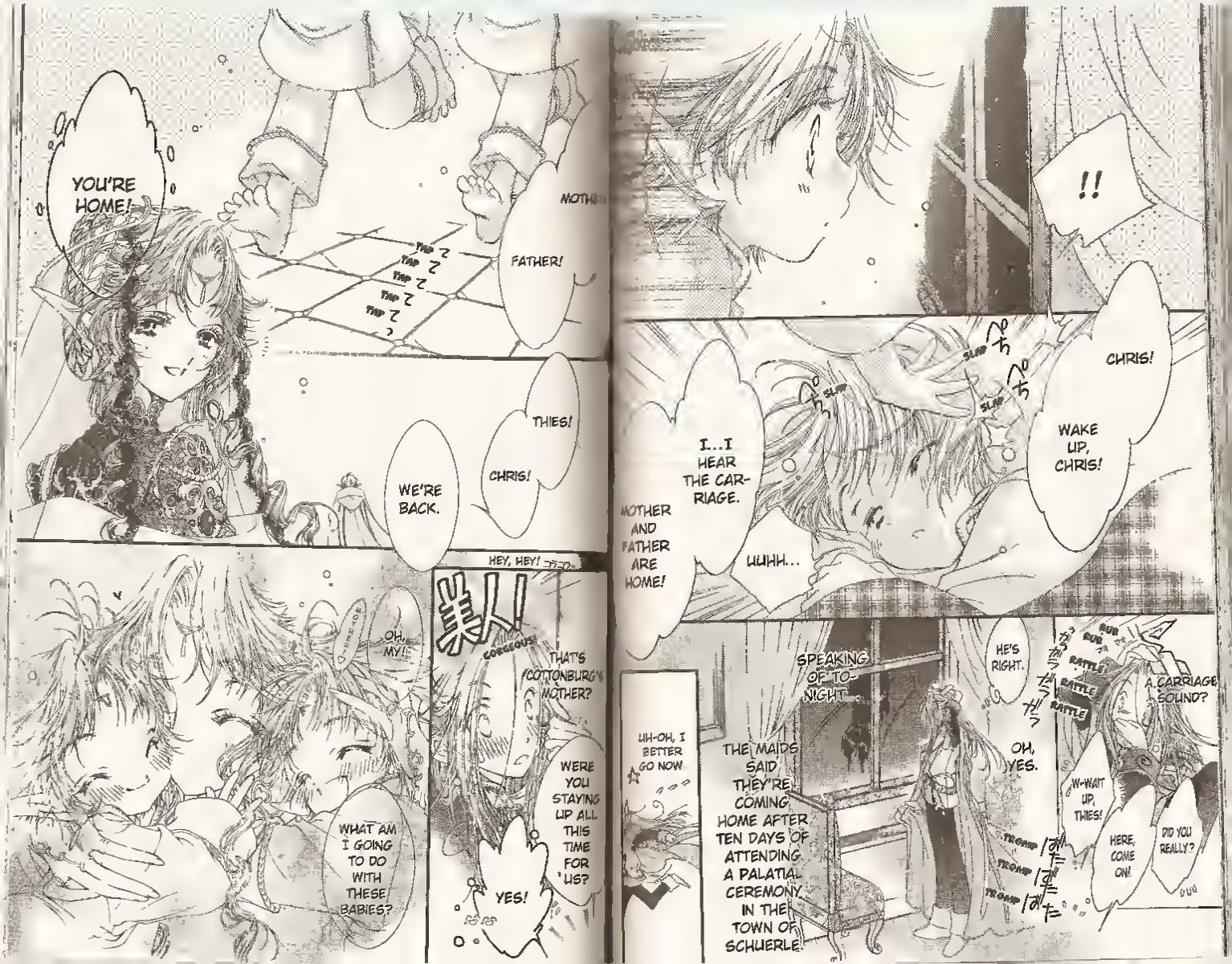

THAT DAY...
CHRIS AND I WERE BORN ON THE BREEZY SPRING MORNING IRIS OLVA DESCENDED.
WE WERE THE FIRST TWINS IN THE HISTORY OF OUR LAND, AND SO WE WERE REGARDED AS CURIOSITIES—OR AS OUTCASTS
OUR FATHER, RESPECTFUL, STRICT, OCCASIONALLY FRIGHTENING, BUT SO STRONG,
OUR MOTHER, BEAUTIFUL AND KIND, WHO LOVED US MORE THAN ANYBODY,
AND OUR LIVE-IN SERVANTS WERE ALL WONDERFUL.
WE WERE SPENDING OUR ETERNITY SURROUNDED WITH LOVE, KINDNESS, AND BRIGHT HOPE.

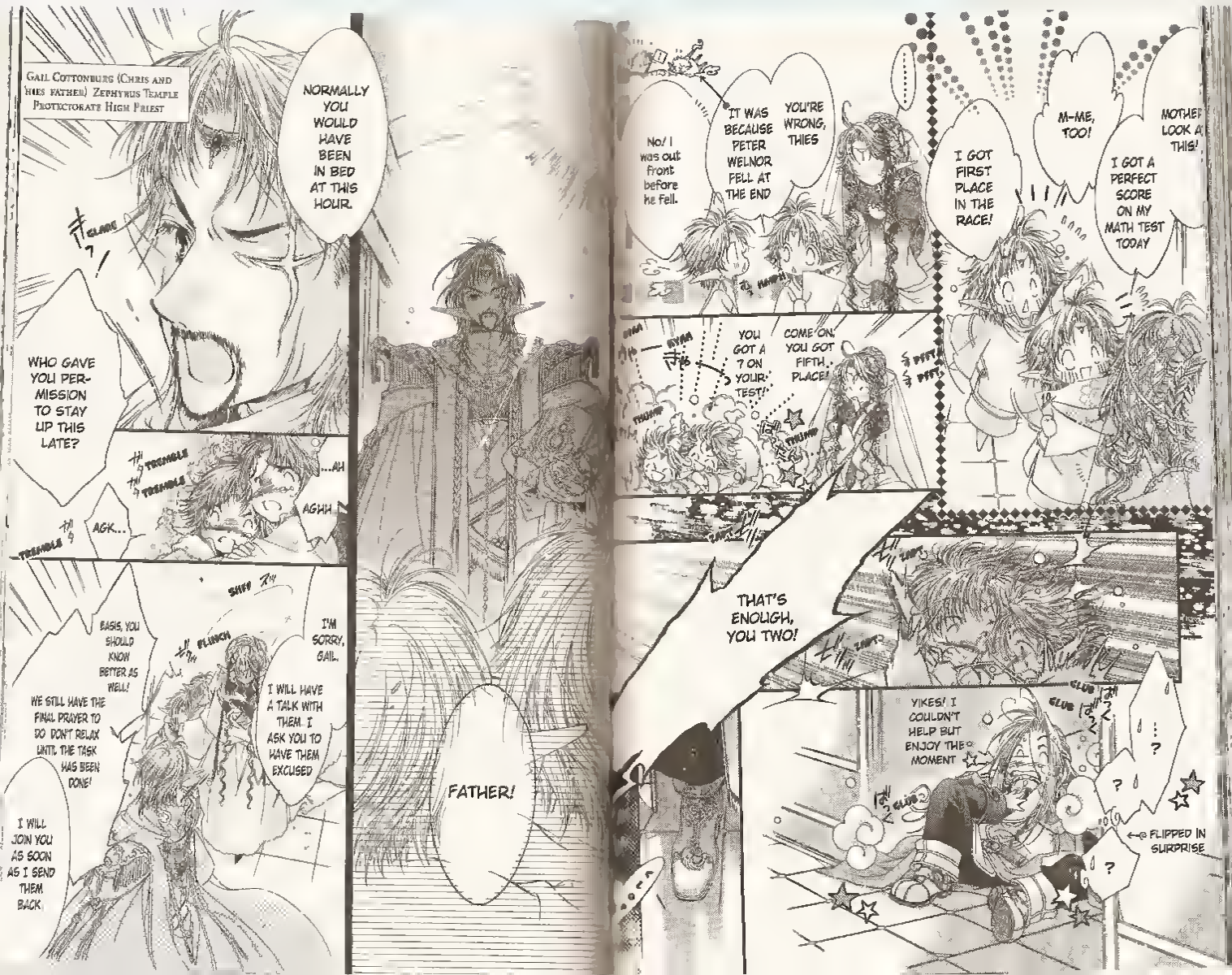
Residence of Gail Cottonburg
43rd Protectorate Supreme
Priest, Zephyrus Temple, Imperial
Forest Land
HMMM.
I KNEW HE WAS A PRIEST'S HEIR. IT'S IN HIS STUDENT DATA. BUT...
...I DIDN'T REALIZE HE IS THE SON OF A TEMPLE PROTECTORATE HIGH PRIEST.
IT'S ALL IN MARBLE
FROM THE INFORMATION I'VE GATHERED, THIS SEEMS TO BE COTTONBURG'S TIME FRAME AT AGE 5
I MUST PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO SOUNDS AND ALL THAT.
IT'S UNNATURAL FOR DOORS TO OPEN AND THINGS TO MOVE WITHOUT ANYONE AROUND
...SO I CAN PULL OFF SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
Uumph!
COTTONBURG HASN'T YET ACKNOWLEDGED MY EXISTENCE...
OOPS!

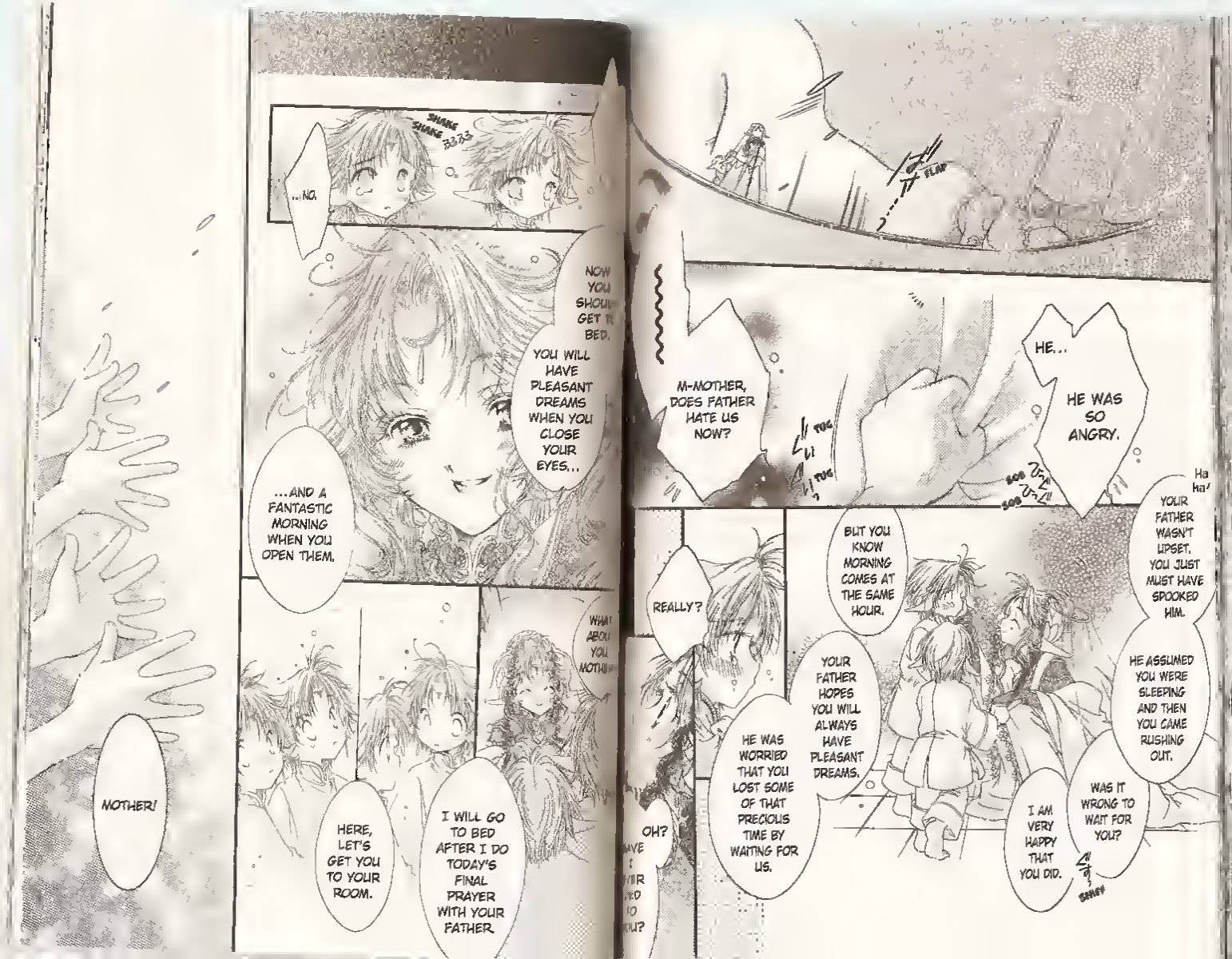
16th Bell: The Emerald Fairy Tale, Part Two

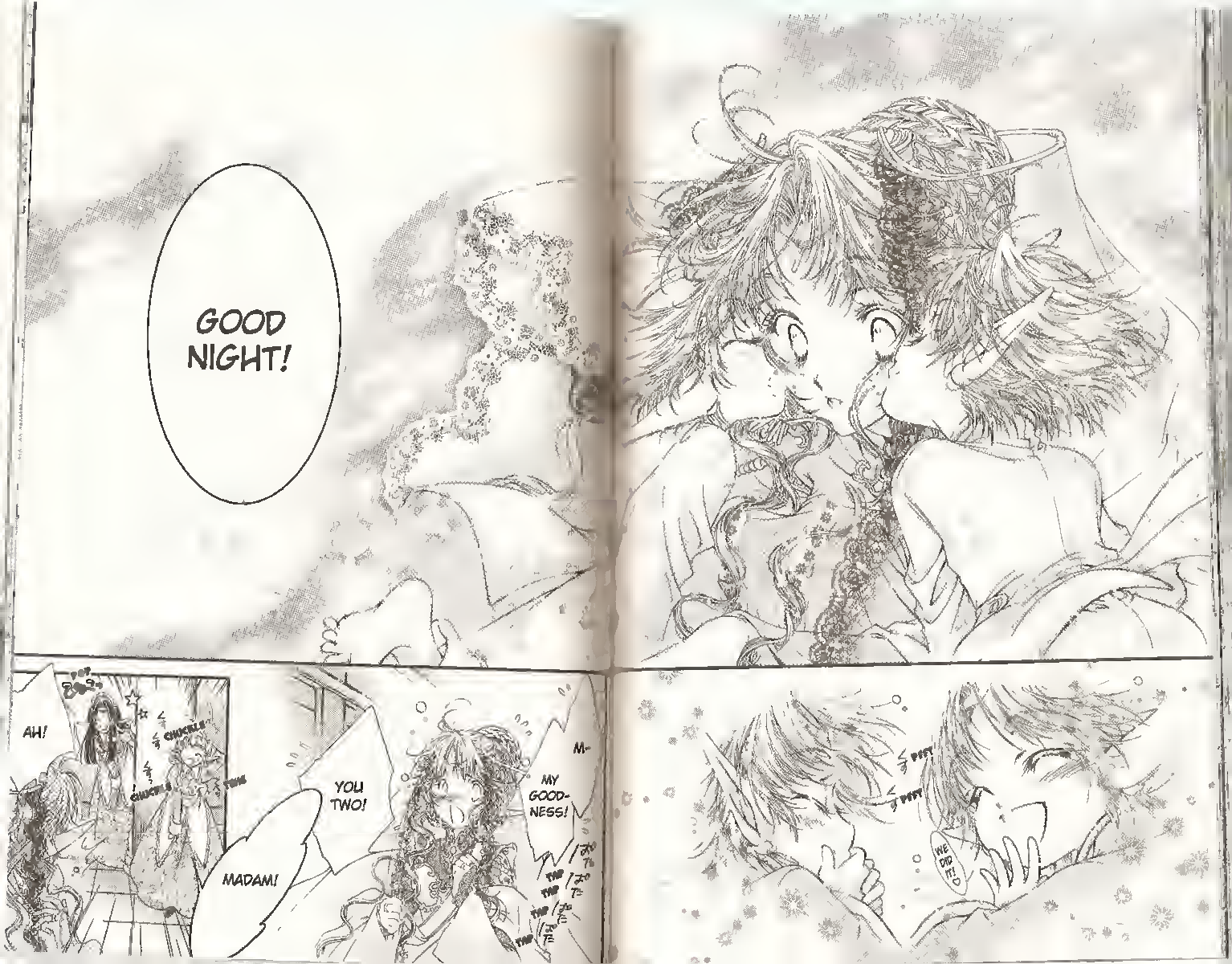


むくっ
Not yet! Don't make a sound yet
Frantic
Backward
Flinch
Oh!
Maybe I should lay a blanket over them.
But won't they catch cold if they sleep on the floor?
Roam
Roam
Roam
Roam
Shift
Twitch
They really are perfect twins.
Wow.
I can't tell them apart.
With their eyes closed...
すや

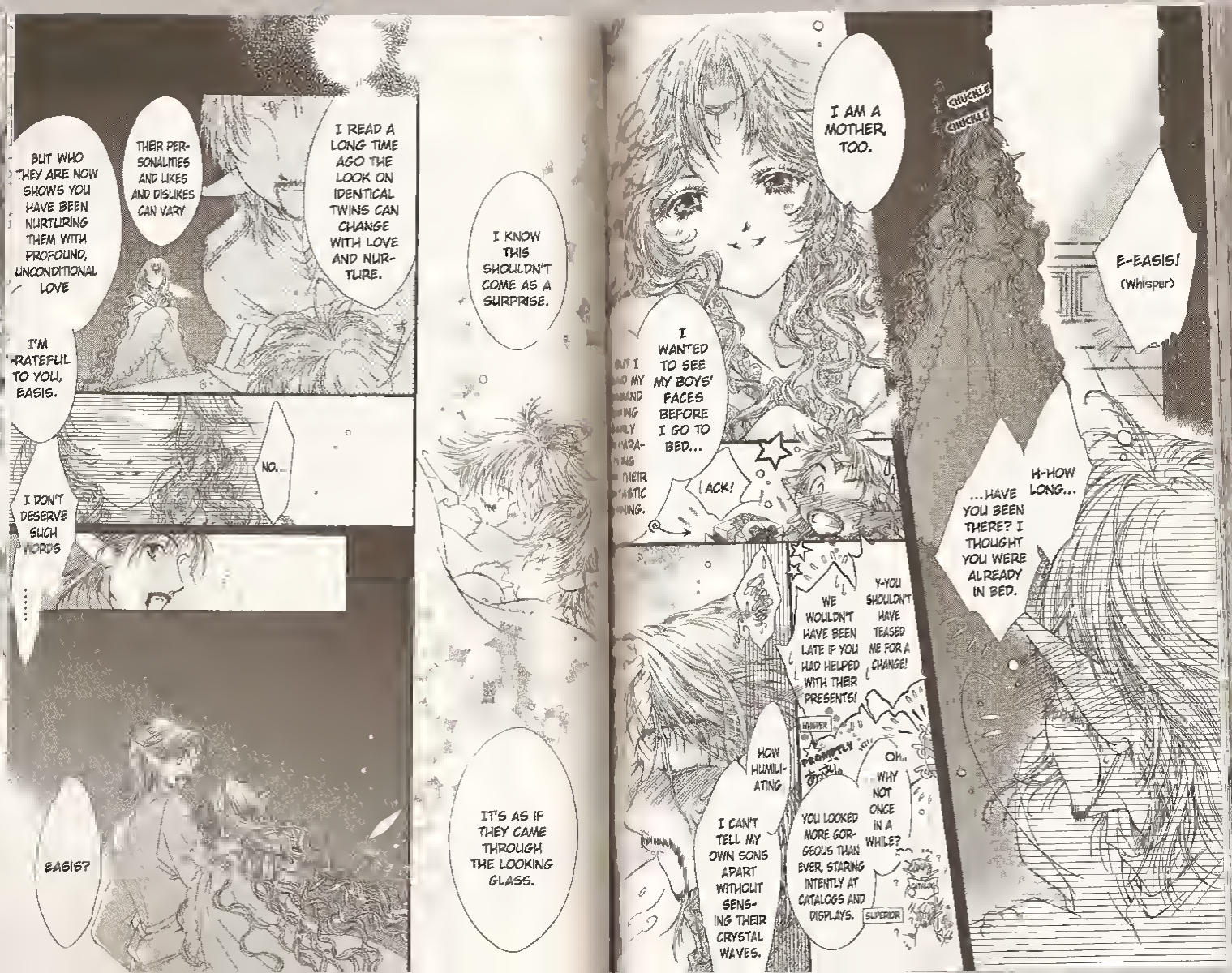

YOU'RE HOME!
MOTHER!
FATHER!
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
THIES!
CHRIS!
WE'RE BACK.
!!
CHRIS!
WAKE UP, CHRIS!
SLAP
SLAP
SLAP
I...I HEAR THE CARRIAGE.
MOTHER AND FATHER ARE HOME!
UUHH...
A CARRIAGE SOUND?
RUN
RUN
RATTLE
RATTLE
RATTLE
HE'S RIGHT.
OH, YES.
SPEAKING OF TONIGHT...
THE MAIDS SAID THEY'RE COMING HOME AFTER TEN DAYS OF ATTENDING A PALATIAL CEREMONY IN THE TOWN OF SCHUERLE.
UH-OH, I BETTER GO NOW
TROMP
TROMP
TROMP
W-WAIT UP, THIES!
HERE, COME ON!
DID YOU REALLY?
HEY, HEY!
GORGEOUS!
THAT'S COTTONBURG'S MOTHER?
WERE YOU STAYING UP ALL THIS TIME FOR US?
YES!
OH, MY!
WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH THESE BABIES?

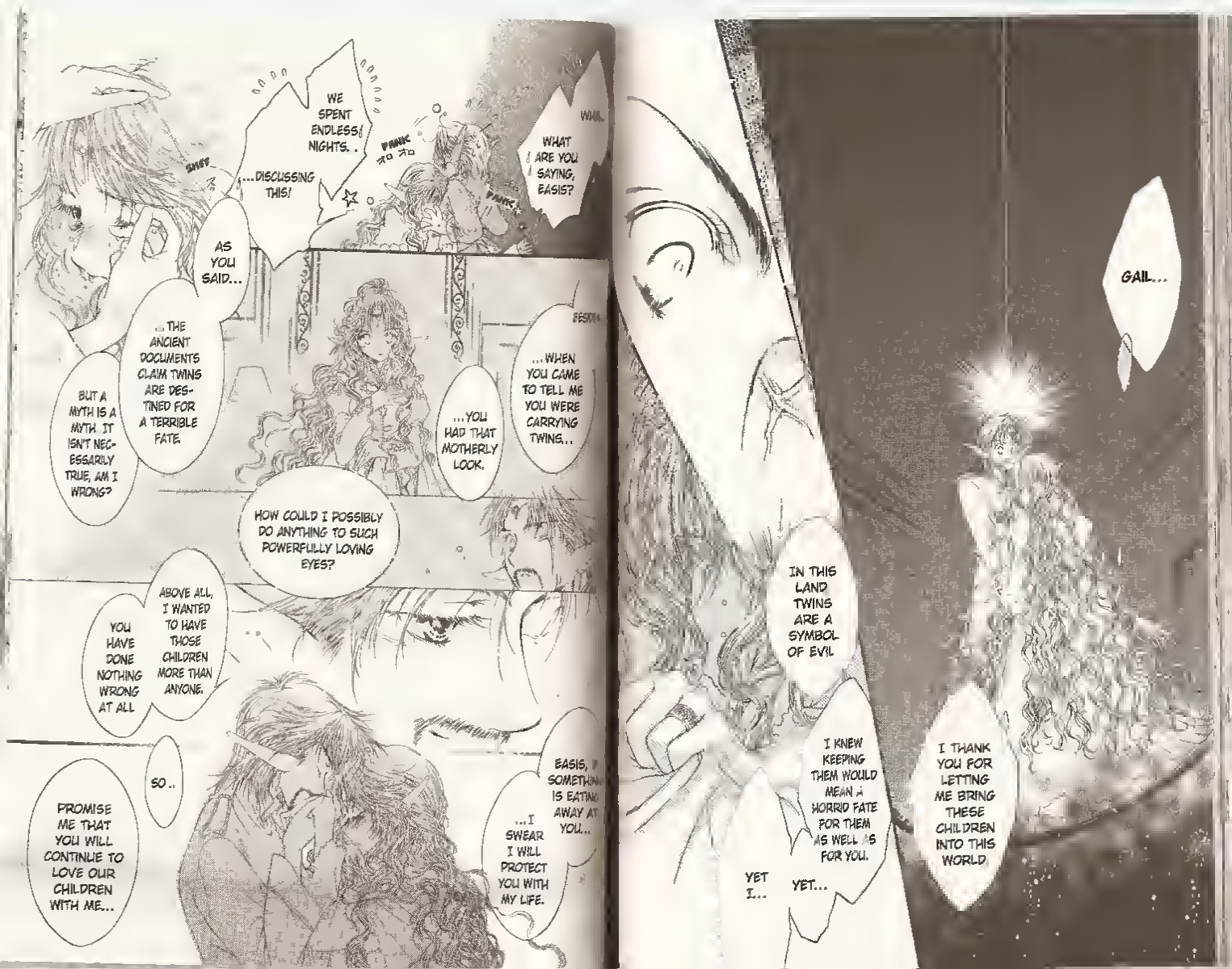

GAIL COTTONBURG (CHRIS AND HIES FATHER) ZEPHYRUS TEMPLE PROTECTORATE HIGH PRIEST
NORMALLY YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN IN BED AT THIS HOUR.
CLANG
WHO GAVE YOU PERMISSION TO STAY UP THIS LATE?
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
...AH
AGHH
AGK...
TREMBLE
SHIV
FLINCH
BASIS, YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER AS WELL!
I'M SORRY, GAIL.
I WILL HAVE A TALK WITH THEM. I ASK YOU TO HAVE THEM EXCUSED
WE STILL HAVE THE FINAL PRAYER TO DO. DON'T RELAX UNTIL THE TASK HAS BEEN DONE!
I WILL JOIN YOU AS SOON AS I SEND THEM BACK.
FATHER!
No! I was out front before he fell.
IT WAS BECAUSE PETER WELNOR FELL AT THE END
YOU'RE WRONG, THIES
I GOT FIRST PLACE IN THE RACE!
M-ME, TOO!
I GOT A PERFECT SCORE ON MY MATH TEST TODAY
MOTHER LOOK AT THIS!
GYAA
GYAA
YOU GOT A 7 ON YOUR TEST!?
COME ON, YOU GOT FIFTH PLACE!
FIFTH
FIFTH
THUMP
THUMP
THAT'S ENOUGH, YOU TWO!
YIKES! I COULDN'T HELP BUT ENJOY THE MOMENT
CLUB
CLUB
CLUB
FLIPPED IN SURPRISE


MOTHER!
HERE, LET'S GET YOU TO YOUR ROOM.
I WILL GO TO BED AFTER I DO TODAY'S FINAL PRAYER WITH YOUR FATHER.
WHAT ABOU YOU MOTH
OH?
...AND A FANTASTIC MORNING WHEN YOU OPEN THEM.
YOU WILL HAVE PLEASANT DREAMS WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES...
NOW YOU SHOU GET TO BED.
...NO.
SHAKE SHAKE
REALLY?
M-MOTHER, DOES FATHER HATE US NOW?
HE... HE WAS SO ANGRY.
FLAP
TUG TUG
HE WAS WORRIED THAT YOU LOST SOME OF THAT PRECIOUS TIME BY WAITING FOR US.
YOUR FATHER HOPES YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE PLEASANT DREAMS.
BUT YOU KNOW MORNING COMES AT THE SAME HOUR.
YOUR FATHER WASN'T UPSET. YOU JUST MUST HAVE SPOOKED HIM.
HE ASSUMED YOU WERE SLEEPING AND THEN YOU CAME RUSHING OUT.
I AM VERY HAPPY THAT YOU DID.
WAS IT WRONG TO WAIT FOR YOU?
SHIVER

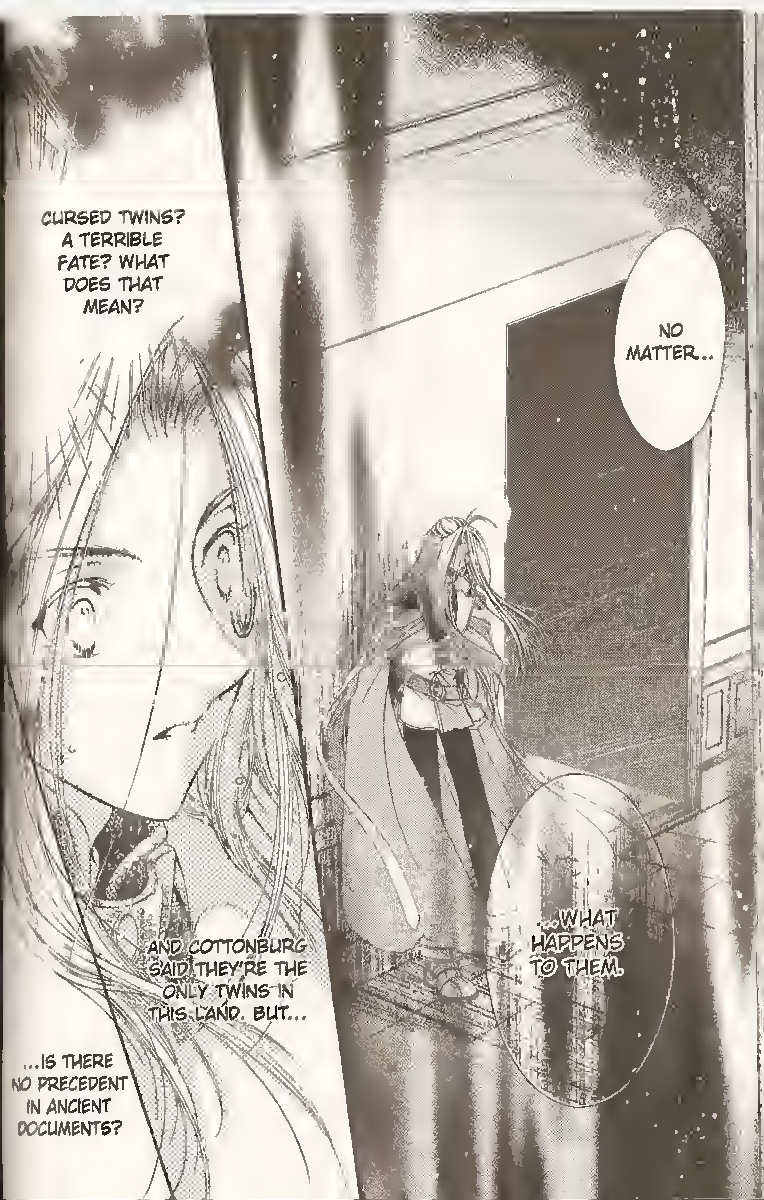

GOOD NIGHT!
AH!
CHUCKLE
CHUCKLE
YOU TWO!
MADAM!
M-
MY GOOD-NESS!
PANT
PANT
WE DID IT!

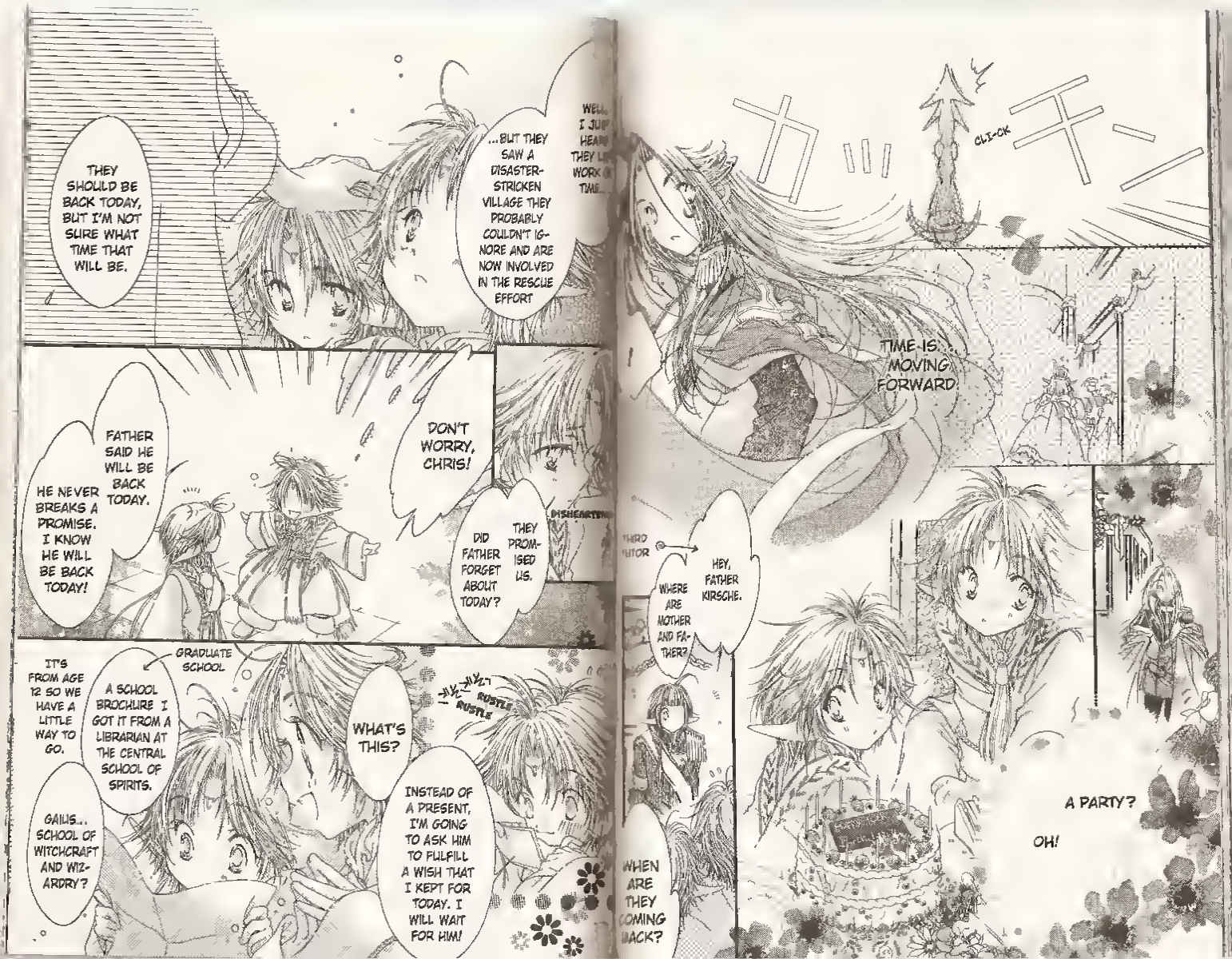
SO SORRY
HIDING OUT OF GUILT
THEY INSISTED ON STAYING UP UNTIL THEY GAVE YOU BOTH A GOOD-NIGHT KISS. THEY WOULDN'T LISTEN AT ALL.
IT WASN'T EASY.
YOU WERE WATCHING US BEHIND THE DOOR.
HOW DID YOU ENJOY YOUR MEETING WITH THE TWINS?
NOT YOU, TOO!
WELCOME BACK
PFFT!
BUT THEY'RE SUCH CUTE TWINS...
IT SHOWS THEY HAVE BEEN RAISED WITH LOTS OF LOVE.
...TO EXPRESS LOVE IN SUCH A WAY AT THAT AGE.
YES...
PROFESSOR SAID THE KEY LIES IN HERE, BUT I DOUBT IT FROM WHAT I HAVE SEEN.
OR IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE?
FLINCH
RIGHT IS CHRIS AND LEFT IS THIES.

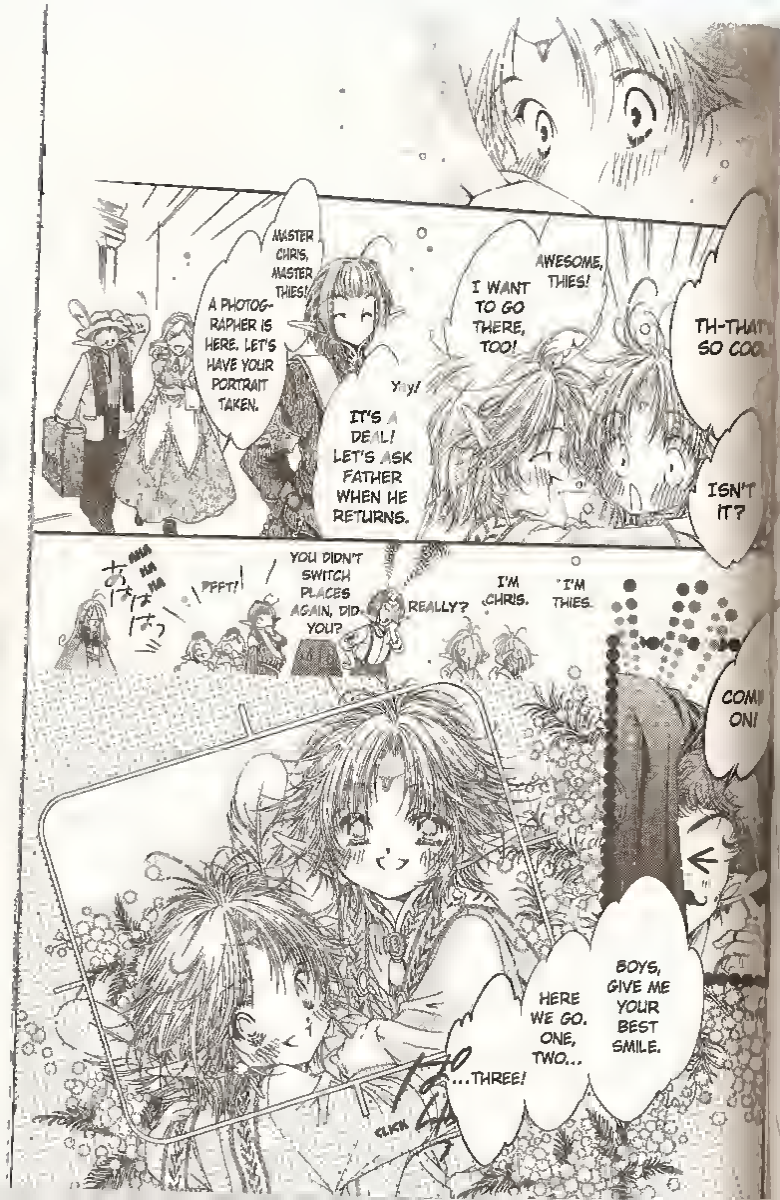

I READ A LONG TIME AGO THE LOOK ON IDENTICAL TWINS CAN CHANGE WITH LOVE AND NURTURE.
THEIR PERSONALITIES AND LIKES AND DISLIKES CAN VARY
BUT WHO THEY ARE NOW SHOWS YOU HAVE BEEN NURTURING THEM WITH PROFOUND, UNCONDITIONAL LOVE
I'M GRATEFUL TO YOU, EASIS.
NO...
I DON'T DESERVE SUCH WORDS
EASIS?
I KNOW THIS SHOULDN'T COME AS A SURPRISE.
IT'S AS IF THEY CAME THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS.
I AM A MOTHER, TOO.
CHUCKLE CHUCKLE
E-EASIS! (Whisper)
H-HOW LONG...
...HAVE YOU BEEN THERE? I THOUGHT YOU WERE ALREADY IN BED.
I WANTED TO SEE MY BOYS' FACES BEFORE I GO TO BED...
ACK!
WE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN LATE IF YOU HAD HELPED WITH THEIR PRESENTS!
Y-YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TEASED ME FOR A CHANGE!
WHISPER
PROMPTLY
HOW HUMILIATING
I CAN'T TELL MY OWN SONS APART WITHOUT SENSING THEIR CRYSTAL WAVES.
YOU LOOKED MORE GORGEOUS THAN EVER, STARING INTENTLY AT CATALOGS AND DISPLAYS.
Oh... WHY NOT ONCE IN A WHILE?
SUPERIOR


WE SPENT ENDLESS NIGHTS..
...DISCUSSING THIS!
PANIC
WAIL
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, EASIS?
SNIFF
AS YOU SAID...
...THE ANCIENT DOCUMENTS CLAIM TWINS ARE DESTINED FOR A TERRIBLE FATE.
BUT A MYTH IS A MYTH. IT ISN'T NECESSARILY TRUE, AM I WRONG?
...WHEN YOU CAME TO TELL ME YOU WERE CARRYING TWINS...
...YOU HAD THAT MOTHERLY LOOK.
HOW COULD I POSSIBLY DO ANYTHING TO SUCH POWERFULLY LOVING EYES?
ABOVE ALL, I WANTED TO HAVE THOSE CHILDREN MORE THAN ANYONE.
YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING WRONG AT ALL
SO..
PROMISE ME THAT YOU WILL CONTINUE TO LOVE OUR CHILDREN WITH ME...
...I SWEAR I WILL PROTECT YOU WITH MY LIFE.
GAIL...
I THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME BRING THESE CHILDREN INTO THIS WORLD
IN THIS LAND TWINS ARE A SYMBOL OF EVIL
I KNEW KEEPING THEM WOULD MEAN A HORRID FATE FOR THEM AS WELL AS FOR YOU.
YET I...
YET...

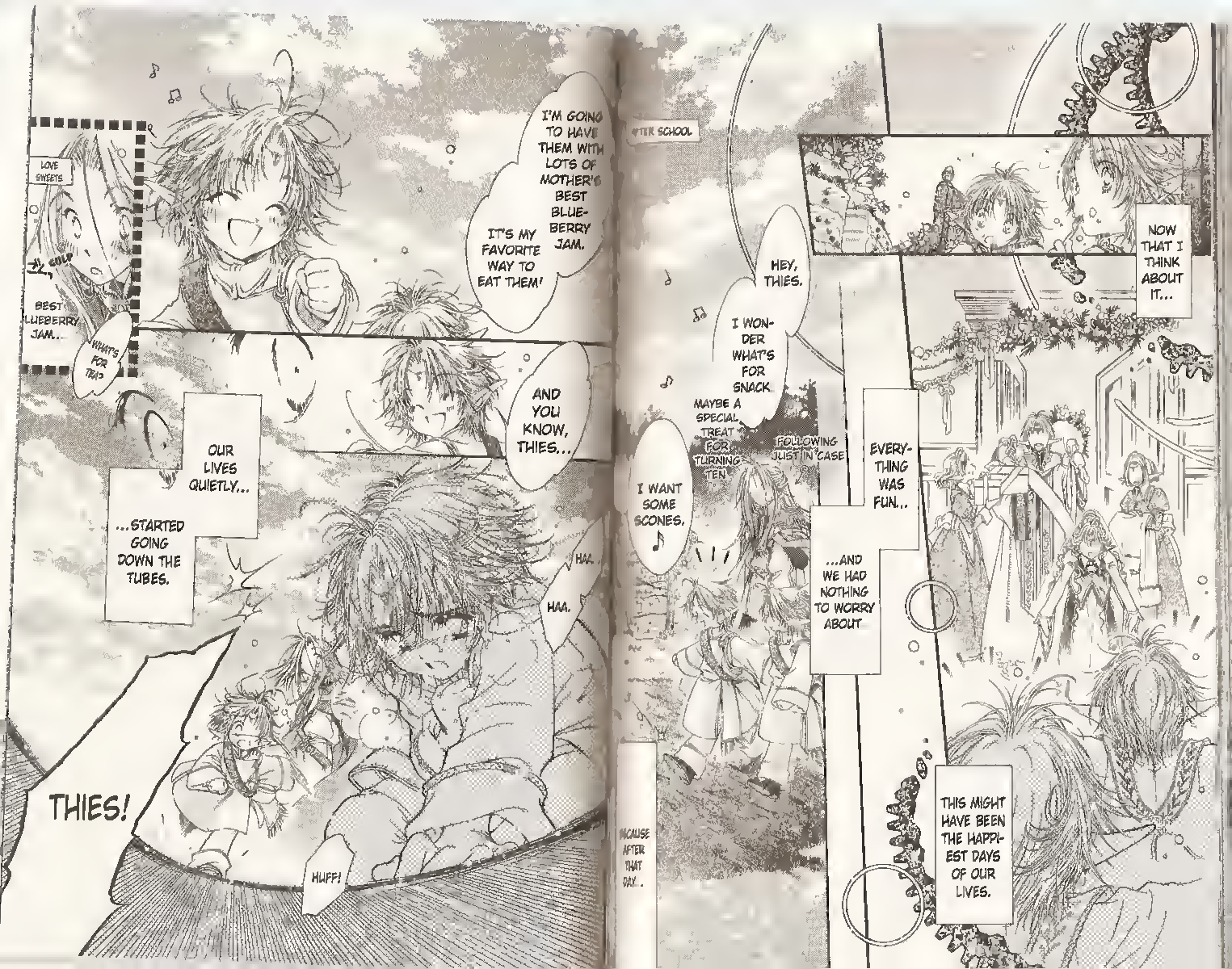
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
WHOOSH
GASP
THERE MUST BE A TRUTH BEHIND IT AND THAT IS—
!?
FROOSH
FROOSH
!!
FROOSH
WHOOSH
FROOSH
IS IT THE SCENE THAT'S CHANGING... OR IS IT TIME ITSELF?
THE SCENERY DISSIPATES
NO!

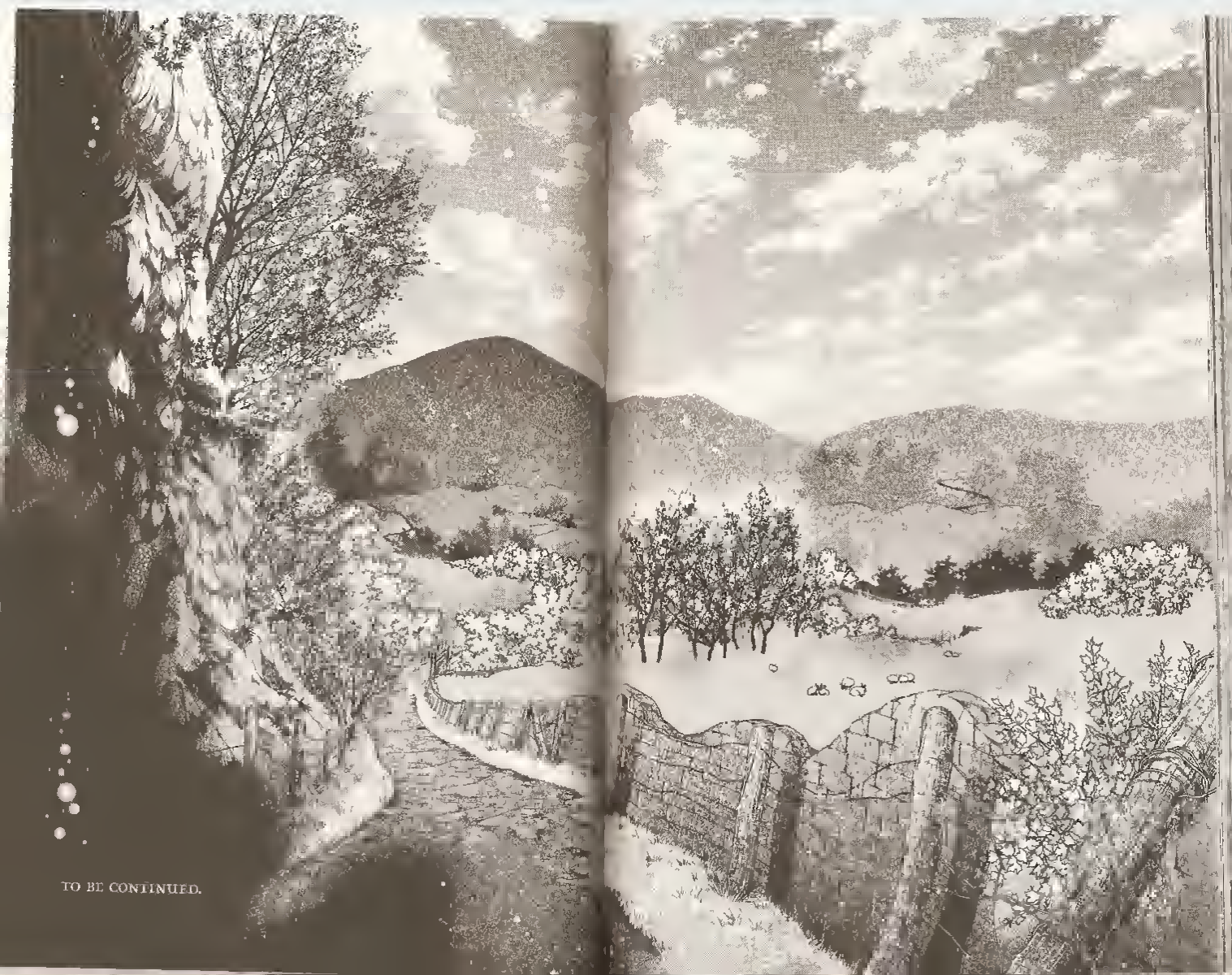

CURSED TWINS? A TERRIBLE FATE? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
AND COTTONBURG SAID THEY'RE THE ONLY TWINS IN THIS LAND. BUT...
...IS THERE NO PRECEDENT IN ANCIENT DOCUMENTS?
NO MATTER...
...WHAT HAPPENS TO THEM.


THEY SHOULD BE BACK TODAY, BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT TIME THAT WILL BE.
...BUT THEY SAW A DISASTER-STRICKEN VILLAGE THEY PROBABLY COULDN'T IGNORE AND ARE NOW INVOLVED IN THE RESCUE EFFORT
WELL... I JUST HEARD THEY LEFT WORK AT THAT TIME...
FATHER SAID HE WILL BE BACK TODAY.
HE NEVER BREAKS A PROMISE. I KNOW HE WILL BE BACK TODAY!
DON'T WORRY, CHRIS!
DID FATHER FORGET ABOUT TODAY?
THEY PROMISED US.
DISHEARTENED
IT'S FROM AGE 12 SO WE HAVE A LITTLE WAY TO GO.
A SCHOOL BROCHURE I GOT IT FROM A LIBRARIAN AT THE CENTRAL SCHOOL OF SPIRITS.
GRADUATE SCHOOL
GAIUS... SCHOOL OF WITCHCRAFT AND WIZARDRY?
WHAT'S THIS?
INSTEAD OF A PRESENT, I'M GOING TO ASK HIM TO FULFILL A WISH THAT I KEPT FOR TODAY. I WILL WAIT FOR HIM!
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
CLICK
TIME IS MOVING FORWARD
THIRD TUTOR
HEY, FATHER KIRSCHE.
WHERE ARE MOTHER AND FATHER?
WHEN ARE THEY COMING BACK?
A PARTY?
OH!


MASTER CHRIS, MASTER THIES! A PHOTOGRAPHER IS HERE. LET'S HAVE YOUR PORTRAIT TAKEN.
AWESOME, THIES!
I WANT TO GO THERE, TOO!
TH-THAT'S SO COOL
IT'S A DEAL! LET'S ASK FATHER WHEN HE RETURNS.
Y-yy!
ISN'T IT?
YOU DIDN'T SWITCH PLACES AGAIN, DID YOU?
PFFT!
REALLY?
I'M CHRIS.
"I'M THIES.
COME ON!
HERE WE GO. ONE, TWO...
...THREE!
CLICK
BOYS, GIVE ME YOUR BEST SMILE.

WITH MY athletic TALENTS, I'LL MAKE IT INTO THE SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS.
...WITH YOUR BRAINS, YOU'LL BE IN THE WIZARDRY CLASS!
BUT WE'RE ENROLLED IN THE SPIRIT HIGH SCHOOL FOR NEXT YEAR.
ARE YOU GOING TO A DIFFERENT SCHOOL?
NO, CHRIS. THE WORLD IS FAR BIGGER THAN WE KNOW.
WE'LL STUDY HARDER AND BECOME STRONGER.
KIDS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES COME TO THIS SCHOOL.
THE LIBRARIAN SAID THEY COULD TEACH US MANY MAGICS WE CAN'T LEARN HERE.
AND THEY EVEN HAVE A SWORDSMANSHIP CLASS.
WE'LL SURPRISE FATHER BY GRADUATING AS VALEDICTORIANS TOGETHER!


LOVE SWEETS
AT LAST, GOLD
BEST BLUEBERRY JAM..
WHAT'S FOR TEA?
I'M GOING TO HAVE THEM WITH LOTS OF MOTHER'S BEST BLUE-BERRY JAM.
IT'S MY FAVORITE WAY TO EAT THEM!
AND YOU KNOW, THIES...
OUR LIVES QUIETLY...
...STARTED GOING DOWN THE TUBES.
HAA.
HAA.
THIES!
HUFF!
AFTER SCHOOL
HEY, THIES.
I WON-DER WHAT'S FOR SNACK.
MAYBE A SPECIAL TREAT FOR TURNING TEN
FOLLOWING JUST IN CASE
I WANT SOME SCONES.
EVERY-THING WAS FUN..
...AND WE HAD NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT...
THIS MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE HAPPI-EST DAYS OF OUR LIVES.
BECAUSE AFTER THAT DAY..



TO BE CONTINUED.

Zephyrus Temple,
Beloved Forest hand
Gail Cottonburg
43rd Protectorate High Priest
Easis Cottonburg
3rd Assistant Priestess

As you know, they are Chris's parents. The father's secret will be revealed in the next chapter. The death of his mother and his father's decline in power came as a shock to him—and his resulting deafness to the spirit world caused him to be looked down on as a priest. He did not begin to heal from this trauma until he met Easis. Easis, who was a hidden priestess of Moon Forest—a forest region that remains most silent from spirits in the land, taught Gail the joy of conversing with spirits...and became his first love. Owing to the difference in social standing—they were an aristocrat and an ordinary villager—many people disapproved of their relationship, but that's where his father refused to give in. (Laughs) They defended their love and got married. Since their unique genetic makeup would only allow one-time pregnancy—a second pregnancy could be fatal—Easis decided to give birth even though she knew she was bearing twins. It was a difficult childbirth and almost put her life in danger, but she succeeded in giving birth. Together Easis and Gail raised the twins with profound love. It's such a poignant story that I would like to draw it someday (Laughs)

* my Love *

YO-YO-SAMA OF YO-YO RARANDAYS
THANK YOU FOR YOUR BEAUTIFUL DESIGNS! I'M SORRY FOR ALWAYS MAKING EXCESSIVE DEMANDS.

KOZUE-SAMA OF PON-WON
I APPRECIATE YOUR HELP SINCE LAST SUMMER. (LAUGHS) MY BANGLE CRYSTAL FUGU-CHAN IS DOING WELL.

KYANG NATURE-SAMA OF STAND SHOP
I USED THEIR STAND FOR A LACE PRINT IN THE NEW COLOR ILLUSTRATION. THANK YOU FOR PERMISSION TO USE IT.

& You!!

Aventura Character Profiles

Yuehua Long
(Canary Dancer)

Eye Color: **Alexandrite**
Subjects: **Pharmacological Magic (Apothecary), Incense-based Sorcery**

She is the youngest daughter of the main house of a leading dragon-controlling, martial arts protectorate school. Though she is highly skilled in martial arts, particularly with spears, owing to early training with her many brothers, she changed her specialty after she was moved by a stranger's words. She is the newest professor of the 13 Mages with an apothecary certificate. She has a crush on a professor. (Laughs)

Elgref Seamary
(Turquoise Yasha Demon)

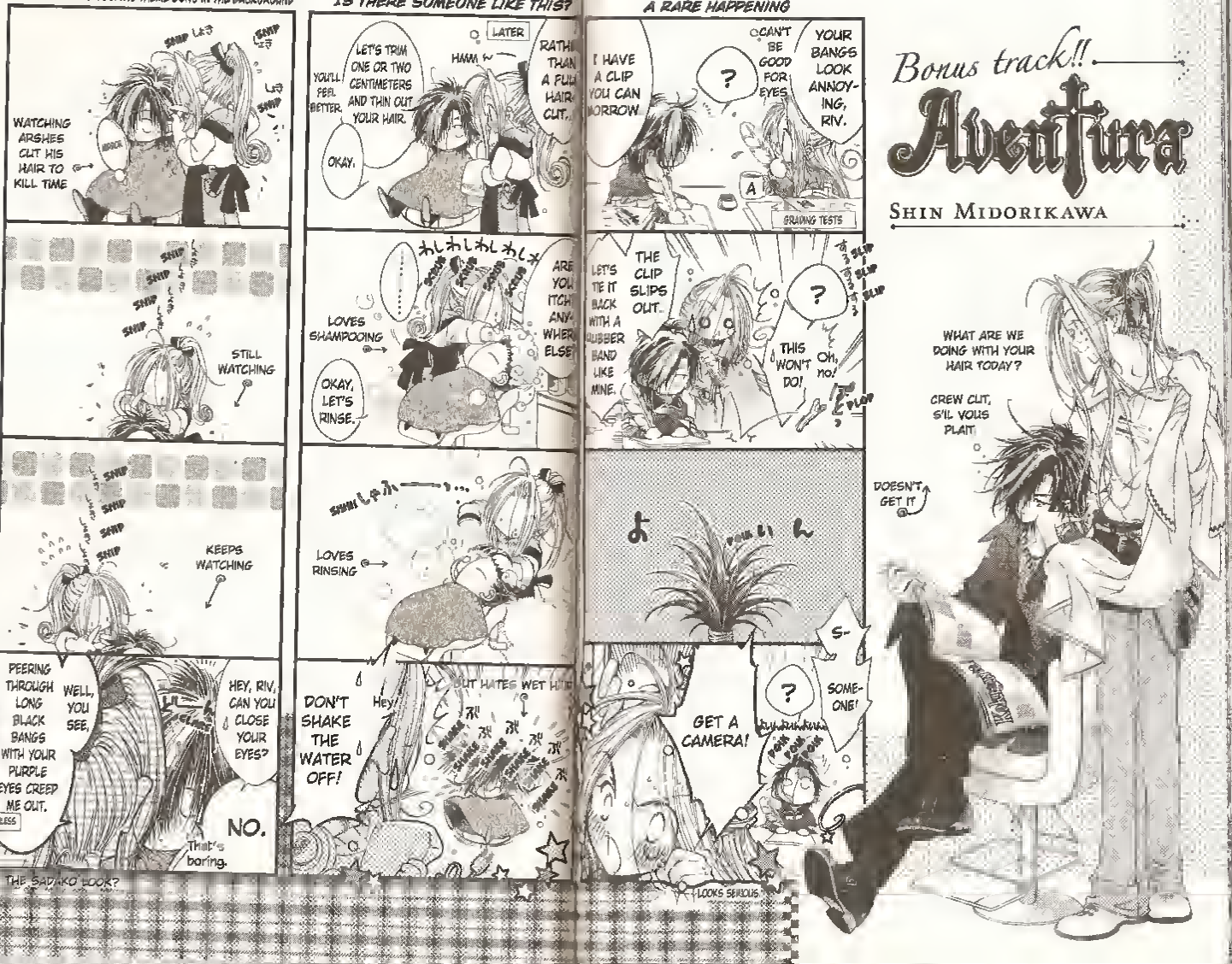
Eye Color: **Celestite**
Subjects: **All Swordsmanship, Hypnotic Magic (currently not offered)**

He is from an aristocratic family of pure werewolf origin and this is his original form. (Laughs) Not too many students are aware of this because his ears are usually transformed into a human form to avoid frightening them off. He can enter people's dreams and is good at manipulating their minds. Though he hardly appears in this chapter, please remember that he is a pretty important character. (Laughs)

Special Thanks! WITH LOVE!

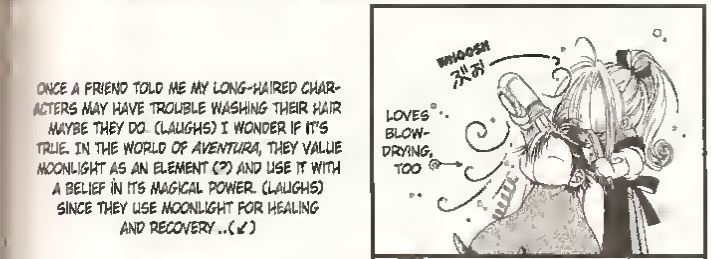
ASSISTANT
You Yukinoji

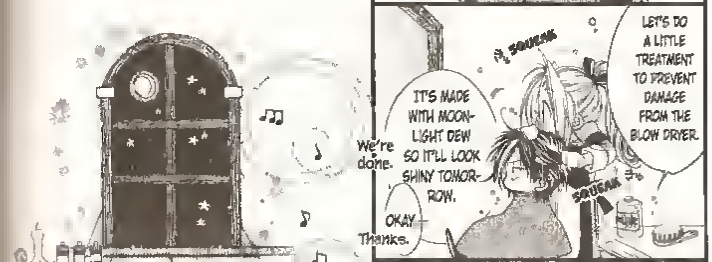
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE REACHED VOLUME 5! YOU CONTINUALLY SHARED AN INCREDIBLE TO PUT THE PEN DOWN. (LAUGHS) YOUR SCREEN-TONING IS ONE OF THE INDISPENSIBLE SKILLS FOR ME. THANK YOU ALWAYS! SOMETIMES WE FIGHT OVER EATING OVERSEAS AND BUT I CAN'T AGREE WITH EATING OVERSEAS AND FINISH TOGETHER!

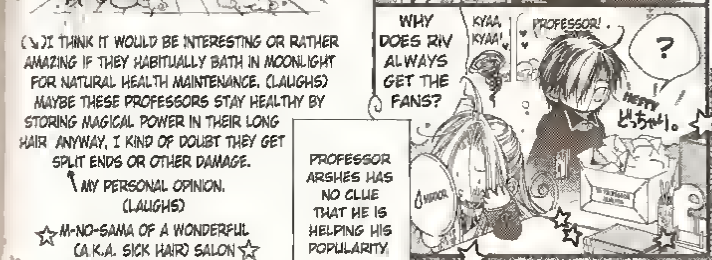

WITH THE 3 MINUTE COOKING THEME SONG IN THE BACKGROUND
WATCHING ARSHES CUT HIS HAIR TO KILL TIME
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
STILL WATCHING
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
SNIP
KEEPS WATCHING
PEERING THROUGH LONG BLACK BANGS WITH YOUR PURPLE EYES CREEP ME OUT.
WELL, YOU SEE,
HEY, RIV, CAN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES?
NO.
That's boring.
BREATHLESS
THE SADAKO LOOK?
IS THERE SOMEONE LIKE THIS?
LATER
YOU'LL FEEL BETTER.
LET'S TRIM ONE OR TWO CENTIMETERS AND THIN OUT YOUR HAIR.
HMM...
RATHER THAN A FULL HAIRCUT,
OKAY.
LOVES SHAMPOOING
SKRUB
SKRUB
SKRUB
SKRUB
ARE YOU ITCHY ANYWHERE ELSE?
OKAY, LET'S RINSE.
LOVES RINSING
SHAA
DON'T SHAKE THE WATER OFF!
Hey!
BUT HATES WET HAIR
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
A RARE HAPPENING
I HAVE A CLIP YOU CAN BORROW.
?
CAN'T BE GOOD FOR EYES.
YOUR BANGS LOOK ANNOYING, RIV.
A
GRADING TESTS
LET'S TIE IT BACK WITH A RUBBER BAND LIKE MINE.
THE CLIP SLIPS OUT.
SLIP
SLIP
SLIP
?
THIS WON'T DO!
Oh, no!
FLOP
GET A CAMERA!
?
S-
SOME-ONE!
LOOKS SERIOUS
Bonus track!!
Aventura
SHIN MIDORIKAWA
WHAT ARE WE DOING WITH YOUR HAIR TODAY?
CREW CUT, S'IL VOUS PLAIT.
DOESN'T GET IT

LITTLE KINDNESS

ONCE A FRIEND TOLD ME MY LONG-HAIRED CHARACTERS MAY HAVE TROUBLE WASHING THEIR HAIR MAYBE THEY DO. (LAUGHS) I WONDER IF IT'S TRUE. IN THE WORLD OF *AVENTURA*, THEY VALUE MOONLIGHT AS AN ELEMENT (?) AND USE IT WITH A BELIEF IN ITS MAGICAL POWER. (LAUGHS) SINCE THEY USE MOONLIGHT FOR HEALING AND RECOVERY..(↙)




SQUEAK
LET'S DO A LITTLE TREATMENT TO PREVENT DAMAGE FROM THE BLOW DRYER.
IT'S MADE WITH MOONLIGHT DEW SO IT'LL LOOK SHINY TOMORROW.
We're done.
SQUEAK
OKAY
Thanks.



SIDE BY SIDE IN THE FACULTY ROOM

(↘)I THINK IT WOULD BE INTERESTING OR RATHER AMAZING IF THEY HABITUALLY BATH IN MOONLIGHT FOR NATURAL HEALTH MAINTENANCE. (LAUGHS) MAYBE THESE PROFESSORS STAY HEALTHY BY STORING MAGICAL POWER IN THEIR LONG HAIR. ANYWAY, I KIND OF DOUBT THEY GET SPLIT ENDS OR OTHER DAMAGE.

↑MY PERSONAL OPINION. (LAUGHS)

☆M-NO-SAMA OF A WONDERFUL (A.K.A. SICK HAIR) SALON☆

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME E-MAIL PICTURES OF YOUR IMPORTANT BUSINESS TOOLS.

↑GOT DRESSED-UP AND STRUCK A POSE.

PROFESSOR ARSHES HAS NO CLUE THAT HE IS HELPING HIS POPULARITY.

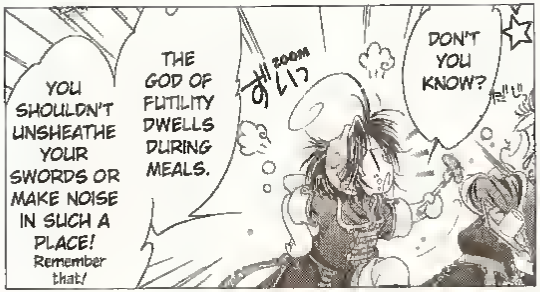
Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction with our translation of the work, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

"ABNORMAL WATER LEVELS AROUND THE WORLD!"
"RIVER OVERFLOWS CAUSING FATALITIES!"
THEY SEEM TO BE IN BIG TROUBLE. I WONDER WHY.
DIDN'T THEY GET UNDINE'S BLESSING?

Undine, page 16

Undine is a female water spirit, from German mythology. Born without a soul, she gained one when she married a mortal and bore his child.


YOU SHOULDN'T UNSHEATHE YOUR SWORDS OR MAKE NOISE IN SUCH A PLACE! Remember that!
THE GOD OF FUTILITY DWELLS DURING MEALS.
zoom
DON'T YOU KNOW?

God of Futility, page 20

In this scene, Lewin has mistaken *jōhō no kamisama* or "god of information" with *hōjō no kamisama* or "god of fertility." To preserve the effect of the pun, we had him confuse "fertility" with "futility."

Nothing of the Ordinary, page 22

Lewin is actually saying, *"Ni-chi-jō-cha-pan-ji,"* a mispronunciation of *ni-chi-jō-sa-han-ji*, so Soela corrects him. Most Japanese characters have multiple readings, making it difficult to learn the correct pronunciation.

Mimir's Spring, page 26

Mimir's Spring is known as a spring of wisdom and restoration in Norse mythology.

Seitei, page 32

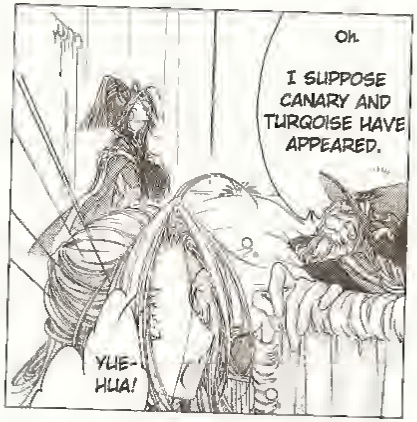
Seitei is a heavenly god who holds dominion over the season of spring.

Kamaitachi, page 34

Kamaitachi is a gust of wind strong enough to cut people's skin.

Porrell Laoshi, page 75

Yuehua uses the Chinese honorific *laoshi*, which means "professor." We've retained this honorific to underscore Yuehua's origins.



Yuehua, page 75

Yuehua's name consists of two Chinese characters, *yue* and *hua*, which mean "moon" and "flower" respectively.

Royal Milk Tea, page 111

Royal Milk Tea is English tea with milk and sugar.

Alsvid, page 121

In Norse mythology, Alsvid, "All Swift," is one of the two horses dragging the sun across the sky.

Will-o'-the-Wisp, page 124

Will-o'-the-Wisp is the ghostly light sometimes seen in marshes.

Zephyrus, page 147

In Greek mythology, Zephyrus is the god of the west wind.

Ebisen, page 182

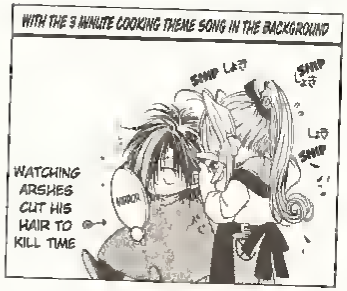
Ebisen, short for Kappa Ebisen, is a shrimp-flavored snack from Japan.

Crew cut, *s'il vous plait*, page 184

Qualfer is actually saying, "*Kakugari s'il vou plait*." *Kakugari* means "crew cut" in Japanese and *s'il vous plait* means "please" in French.

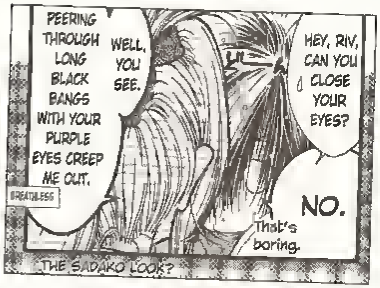
Kakugalyta! page 184

The headline in Qualfer's magazine reads "Kakugalyta!" It is a pun of *kakugari* made to sound European.



3 Minute Cooking, page 185

3 Minute Cooking, an abbreviation of *Cupie 3 Minute Cooking*, is a 10-minute Japanese cooking show featuring recipes that are supposed to be simple enough to make in three minutes.


PEERING THROUGH LONG BLACK BANGS WITH YOUR PURPLE EYES CREEP ME OUT.
WELL, YOU SEE.
HEY, RIV, CAN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES?
NO.
That's boring.
BREATHLESS
THE SADAKO LOOK?

Sadako Look, page 185

This refers to an iconic character from the J-horror classic *The Ring*. Sadako is a shadowy woman whose face is covered in long black hair.